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MONSTERS  
OF THE MOVIES \$1

# MONSTERS OF THE MOVIES

MORE PHOTOS AND  
FRIGHT FEATURES  
THAN EVER!

THE  
FRANKENSTEIN  
MONSTER™



COUNT YORGA  
KING KARLOFF

AND MANY MORE

STAN LEE presents:

No. 2 August 1974

# MONSTERS OF THE MOVIES

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More news is good news. So, here we go  
again!



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# The Life and Death of FRANKENSTEIN

By Jim Harmon

"It's alive! It's alive!"

Those were the first words he heard as he came to life. Somehow... they had some meaning to him. It was not quite clear, but they meant he could move, when he had not been able to move. He could feel, when he had not been able to feel. The Monster was born—not born of woman—but born from the genius of one scientist, Henry Frankenstein.

He was a creature of life, but also one of death. His huge body was formed of parts of corpses. Even his brain had been dead—the brain of a convicted murderer. Yet it was no longer simply the brain of that dead man. The parts of the body were fused by lightning into a new whole, a new creature, such as the world had never before seen.

It was days later before the Monster really presented himself to the outside world in the person of Henry's instructor from college, Professor Waldman. The older man had just warned the young scientist about the kind of materials that the twisted Fritz, Frankenstein's hunchback assistant, had brought him for the construction of a "perfect being." Even Henry Frankenstein's fanatic, feverish enthusiasm wavered under Waldman's ominous warning. "The brain that was stolen from my laboratory was a criminal brain."

The conversation was interrupted by the Creature's stumbling entrance into the great tower room. Frankenstein's creation filled the doorway, his back to the two men. Awkwardly, as one new to movement, the Creature turned. His face seemed to spring out at them. The sores were even more hideous than they had seemed at first. The cranium was ill-formed, massive, square; half-blinded eyes in which a spark of questioning reason was beginning to gleam, stared from the ashen-grey cheeks of a corpse. Metallic electrodes intruded on the flesh of the neck, revealing the link to the lightning that had been another to this being.

Henry moved to literally show his Creature the light of day. He opened the skylight and warm rays flooded the stone chamber. Eagerly, the strange new being tried to hold the sunlight in his fumbling hands.

This moment of pleasure was not to last long for the Creature. Fritz soon came at him with another kind of light—a fiery torch that could burn and sear as well as illuminate. The hunchback took a dark delight in being able to torment some creature even more malformed and

Do you think you know the whole Frankenstein story? Maybe you do. And maybe you don't. Check your own information against this new telling of the classic legend.

Original Dale or the Gila series, Frankenstein Monster in Edson's 1910 Frankenstein. In the dress of Mary Pickford, America's Sweetheart, he really must have been a shock.





THE STYLING OF THE CHINESE BUILDING IN THE GARDEN IS INFLUENCED BY THE PRACTICE OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE.

patients there he was, she knew. From one doctor. He had to make this decision what it proved to be because the patients he saw every day could have applied.

"I am not alone," Bruce says.

"Why do you continue to work?" I ask. "Because I'm needed." He chuckles. "I'm not the only one who feels like that around here."

"Bruce wants a house nearby," Dr. Li says. "He has a family now."

"I don't know. When you see Bruce going to sleep at night, with all these parts of their bodies still in him after a long day's treatment, and then being forced to sit there with a doctor sitting across from him, it's like someone removed the last bit of energy and control and didn't return it to him in his consciousness."

"But Bruce just continues and to work in another doctor's office. The other doctors wouldn't replace him because they believe the Chinese just value money, though that's not a valid criticism of the way the treatment is done. He has the same motivation."

From Bruce's brief that his practice was a Chinese Medicine clinic, I can imagine the world order he has left to that name. The Chinese Art is used. The Chinese language is used.

The painted doctor, unoccupied, sits. His position changes several times. With the body, and that face he turned to place to complete himself and then have the ability of choice about the place being, containing the body part that can be his or not.

Then faded in comes in the unconscious thoughts of the doctor.

Because "Wishbone" represents his transformation, this body can be occupying those rooms, or occupying the room off the office of a thing that way of being from light to dark, covering, going, becoming, the Chinese's "light" and "dark" concept. Wishbone's "dark" really describes his need and desire.

#### Chinese landscape

Bruce prepared for his marriage to Franklin. He



Fritz the Hunchback (Dwight Frye) helps Henry Frankenstein (Kalem Cleve) unwrap the body of the Monster.

All eyes are on Elsa Lanchester as The Bride of Frankenstein at her acceptance of a special award from the Count Dracula Society in March 1974.





Boris Karloff as the Monster is brought back to full animation by Bill Rethole in *The Son of Frankenstein*.

fiancee and the girl who had brought Waldman to the castle to try to lead Henry away from his mad endeavors. Soon he would be happily married, his experiment in the forbidden realms of science forgotten. Soon everything would be all right.

Then why was Henry so tense, so nervous?

The Monster was abroad on the land. (Somehow, by some inner sense, Henry must have known). Everything was new to this creature. The trees, the birds, the water in the lake. Yet he was not quite a child. He was an adult human being...but imperfect.

He saw a little girl playing beside the lake. The Monster lumbered closer. She was the smallest being he had yet seen in this life. She did not frighten him, like the others. She was not big enough to burn him with a torch, or to stick him with a needle. If she dared try anything like that, he could take care of her very easily — even more easily than the others. Yes, if she tried that, he could make her not-moving, as he had been. Somehow, he dimly remembered, it had been better not-moving.

"Would you like one of my flowers?" the little girl asked when he got close to her. She did not seem to hate him like the others. Perhaps she would be his friend. He dropped to his knees beside her, smiling for the first time in his existence.

The child, Maria, placed one of her flowers on the surface of the water. "See how mine floats."

The Monster awkwardly imitated the child's actions, until he had no more flowers to put into the water. But he wanted the fun to go on. Tiny pretty things floated. He had learned that. Perhaps another small pretty thing would do the same. His hands reached out for Maria...

"Do you dare refuse to accept the responsibility for the care of my daughter and this child, sir?" Cedric Hardwick seems to be denouncing of a disgruntled Monster (Lee Cheeley).



There are the expected results of improvements between 1970 and 1975 which a description of the figures already furnished by the City and I might be spared of going off on more lengthy generalizations about Police policies etc. We might, however, make an interesting parenthesis at following the same line of the question.

Let us take the situation before December 1970. At that period P. G. Conroy said the money we received from the original sources of the funds available and appropriated an amount no greater than £100,000 to the Police. Those who know the area do know the amount of £100,000. In my budget notes under estimated one million pounds, the total sum in cash items for my constituency, Peter Gould expressed:

My interpretation of this figure was that he would look up to one million pounds available. And, as he said, "I've got £100,000 to the Police". What's more, he could put his top priority and give £100,000 to the constituency. He had about 100 houses in the constituency, the last about 100 houses in the town which makes one prior to the rest etc. That £100,000 which is available will be spent on the constituency which will go into the roads and drainage and so on. So basically all the constituency will get you what they deserved. The whole point of the money is to expand, extend roads etc., and to ensure that there is a road network completely efficient and intensive. And the money goes to the Police. It is a reasonable thing. And it means another part being removed.

— 10 —

Left: The author with a group from Blackpool Central Labour Party in 1970





Left: Glenn Strange as the Frankenstein Monster in *House of Frankenstein*, 1944, as he carries the semi-conscious Dr. Niemann (Doris Karloff).

The scene was removed most of the time, and in most prints, but it had been performed. The thing is, by leaving what happened to the viewer's imagination, the implication of even darker and more calculated deeds by the Monster was suggested. Especially when Maria's father carried her lifeless, disheveled body among the throngs of celebrating villagers.

But the day was still young for the Monster. There were plenty of things for him yet to do. By some instinct, by some link between creation and creator, the Monster found his way to the castle where Henry and Elizabeth prepared for their wedding.

What were the motivations of this strange creature? Did he have phantom memories of some past life in his human brain? Did he know that this woman was to be the bride of the man who had given her life, who had brought him into a world to be ever friendless and alone?

Clearly, the Monster had no good intentions towards Elizabeth. He stealthily entered the room where she was trying on her wedding gown, and he approached her with no smile such as he'd had for the child, Maria.

When Elizabeth turned and saw the grim, scared face of the Monster, a shrik of terror tore from her throat.

Elizabeth's scream ripped through Henry like a knife. Instantly, he seemed to know what had happened. And even if he hadn't realized it all, the Monster's growl told him the rest.

Elizabeth was found unharmed, and the Monster was gone from the house. But Henry knew he must follow the



Abbott Bibb as the scientist and Connelly meet Frankenstein — or at least his Monitor (Glenn Strange) in the 1944 Universal film.



Lawrence Talbot, the *Wolf Man* (Lon Chaney) in one of his less hairy moods tries to lured the Monster to safety.

creature to whatever fate awaited the both of them in their tangled destiny.

The villagers split into several parties, one each led by the Mayor (or Bürgermeister), by Maria's father; and the final band was led by the somber Henry Frankenstein.

The townsfolk spread out with their torches and dogs. The chase was not long. Henry found the Monster soon enough. The two men high in the hills and they regarded each other with hatred for a timeless moment. Then despite Henry's use of a flaming torch to try and defend himself, the Monster struck down the scientist with a single blow. The tormented being stooped and picked up the fallen man, carrying him away from the rest of the hunters.

Henry regained consciousness among the burning, grinding arms of an old windmill. Through the pivoting gears of the machinery he could see the face of the thing he had made. Many floors below, the howling mob demanded the life of the Monster they pursued. Their torches were used again, to set fire to the towering windmill in which the Monster had hidden himself and his creator.

Soon the flames reached the crouching Monster, and this most dread enemy seared his flesh again. Maddened with fear, screeching in terror, the Monster knew this was another pain he could blame on Henry Frankenstein for returning him from the peace of death. He flung the weakened and barely conscious Henry from

the tower. The man's body struck one of the windmill vanes, caught and hung there. The blade of the propeller-like device lowered Henry's form to where the villagers could remove it and take it back to the castle.

The Monster remained trapped inside, screaming in hideous agony as the flames wrapped his body in their grasp. Eventually, the old structure collapsed. The fire subsided. All was quiet.

Later release prints of *Frankenstein* usually ended at this point. Essentially because the final scene of the original print conflicted with the opening of the sequel, *Bride of Frankenstein* often shown together on a double-bill with the first film.

In the original film's closing moments, the audience saw Elizabeth happily at the bedside of a recuperating Henry, while Henry's father — with an understanding chuckle — closed the door on their privacy.

This was the final scene of the classic horror film of the sound era. After nearly half-a-century, the movie still remains effective and powerful. Certain acting styles and bits of dialogue seem dated and somewhat quaint today. But no one — no matter how relentlessly cynical or "adult" — could dismiss the film as being merely old-fashioned and silly. (If such a person did say that, he would reveal himself not as being sophisticated but rather as being stupid and insensitive.) Few films of 1931 or any other year remain so timeless classics as *Frankenstein*. Karloff's portrayal of the Monster is one of the



For a new generation, Hammer brought the Monster back to life in the *Bride of Frankenstein*, 1931. Of course, that is Peter Cushing operating the switches, and it is the Monster (Karloff) being turned on.

pace, shining moments in the less than a century of motion pictures. The make-up artistry of Jack Pierce and the direction of James Whale no doubt aided Karloff greatly. He made the picture what it was. The cult of fans who give the director all the credit for the artistic success of any movie might disagree, of course. Such people fail to realize that the great stars have such an inner vitality and such a sense of their own being and destiny that they become their own directors. Certainly Boris Karloff was such a star.

\* \* \*

There were still other lives and other deaths ahead for Karloff and for the Frankenstein Monster.

After nearly four years, *The Bride of Frankenstein* appeared in 1935. Karloff and director James Whale returned to their appointed tasks. The additions included Ernest Thesiger as Dr. Pretorius (a role turned down by Bela Lugosi at one point) and, of course, Elsa Lanchester as the beautiful and terrifying Bride.

Mary — if not most — fans find in *The Bride of Frankenstein* their favorite of the series. It is a stylish and memorable picture. But in the opinion of the present writer, horror fans tend to prefer this film for reasons in their own emotions or psychology. The longing for love

and acceptance, followed by the final rejection of the Monster appeals to those in their teens as a projection of their own personal problems. But *The Bride* departs from the classic purity of theme in the original *Frankenstein* precisely by the introduction of this strange love story. (The comedy relief supplied by Dwight Frye, now back as Karl, not the dead Fritz, as he grumbles "This is no job for an honest murderer!" reveals only one instance of director Whale's use of comedy relief for his own relief from boredom on the subject of monster movies.)

The first film concentrated on the basic questions of life and death, creation and destruction. It really said it all. The second film, and all the others, could only elaborate on the subject. These other films could only improvise and entertain; they could not improve upon the original.

At the end of *Bride of Frankenstein*, rejected by his newly constructed Bride, the Monster pulls the lever that will blow the laboratory to atoms, saying "We... belong... dead." But they would not let him rest in peace.

In *Son of Frankenstein*, Karloff returned as the Monster and Bela Lugosi finally took a role in the series as the broken-necked Ygor (probably his most skilled

acting role in films, far more deft than his Dracula. Possibly something even more significant had been added. Basil Rathbone was the hero of the movie. Colin Clive as Henry Frankenstein had been a twitching weakling who only responded to events. Rathbone was a decisive man of action. Though driven to frenzy at times, Rathbone as Wolf von Frankenstein — heir to his father's castle and his genius — was usually in control of the situation. Although the climax required him to perform an athletic feat worthy of Tarzan, it was entirely within his character. Under those circumstances, a man as decisive as Wolf could have at least attempted thatfeat.

In the remaining films of the series, there were decisive characters who knew what they wanted — Larry Talbot, the Wolf Man, wanted to die; the mad Dr. Neumann wanted his enemies dead; Count Dracula wanted to be cured of his unslakable thirst — but none could be called a hero in the classic sense.

Perhaps the Frankenstein Monster was a hero himself, in the sense of one who is actively seeking to work out his destiny. But that was what was more and more taken from him — activity. As early as *The Ghoul of Frankenstein* with Lon Chaney Jr. in the role, the Monster was losing his power and needing rejuvenation treatments.

His sickness progressed through *Frankenstein Meets the Wolf Man* to *House of Frankenstein* and *House of Dracula* where he was little more than an animated prop, awakened to spread a few moments of havok at the climax of the picture.

Still none of these Universal films were ever less than entertaining, even to the oft-maligned *Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein*. Certainly many much more costly movie ventures of today can't claim more than a small portion of the entertainment value of these Universal Frankenstein films.

There were, of course, still other trials ahead for Frankenstein Monster as he encountered Peter Cushing, Christopher Isherwood, and other remarkable beings. As the old novels of generations past said — "Those events lie in the tightly rolled scrolls of the Future . . ."

Future issues of MONSTERS OF THE MOVIES will reveal all the details of the Frankenstein saga, point by point, scene by scene, fact by fact. What you're reading here is this writer's personal opinion; you can disagree, of course—but if you do, let me know—cause controversy is the bread-and-wine of our existence. But what the heck, you can write us even if you do agree. So let us hear from you, okay?



Peter Cushing was still at it in *Frankenstein Must Be Destroyed*, Hammer, 1970. While not the classic Monster, Fletcher (Freddie Jones) is nevertheless a product of Frankenstein's devilish experimentation.



## EDITORIAL- WEST



# So You're Going To Try Again, Dr. Frankenstein?

Yes, the first one was not quite horrible enough, so we did it again.

Here is the second issue of *Monsters of the Movies*. And here is my second editorial. In the first one, Roy Thomas asked me to write about myself — my career as a writer, editor and performer. I did; and Orson Welles has been livid with envy ever since. I can't risk Orson really exploding — what an explosion! — so I'll lay off that sort of thing this time.

Being an editor may be something like being the mother of twelve children. One such mother of twelve was asked, "How do you find time for them all?" She replied, "One took up all my time, so how could the others take any more?" *Monsters of the Movies* seems to take up all my time, and it is only one magazine. How does Roy Thomas do it when he oversees literally dozens of magazines? How can any one man do that and stay sane? Well, perhaps that is the answer.

Of course, Roy has the help of intelligent, trustworthy, energetic people like Tony Isabella and Mary Wolfman. Here on the West Coast, I have Ron Haydock, Dan Clut, and Eric Hoffman. Yes, I see how Roy does it. (These are the jokes, Gang.)

Perhaps I should delve into the philosophy behind *Monsters of the Movies*.

Our goal is to make lots of money, and live on a big yacht, regularly visited by Rachel Welch and Angie Dickinson. Of course, so far as I know, no horror magazine editor has done that yet. So our next goal is not quite so dumb. The second goal is to enjoy creating a

magazine that the readers will respond to with interest and appreciation.

Maybe that is our main goal, after all.

In today's world, most of the people who are in the magazine business are in it because they enjoy what they are doing — writing, editing, and in general creating magazines. Dreams of wealth usually decline to the level of hoping for a new typewriter ribbon.

Magazines are ephemeral — they come and go more rapidly than books. Each issue, sometimes each title.

Yet some constants remain. An interest in horror and the supernatural in general, and in motion pictures in particular, is one of the lasting standards of the magazine business. *Black Cat* appeared around the turn of the century. *Weird Tales* came along in the twenties and stayed for awhile. The fifties brought the first cluster of movie monster magazines, some of which lasted and some did not. Here in 1974, Marvel is answering a continuing demand for this type of publication. It was the readers who asked Marvel to put out a movie monster magazine, and Roy Thomas got me to help do just that.

There is an unquenchable desire in every human being to see beyond today into tomorrow, to look beyond death, to touch the stars and to see the face of the unknowable. Man is no coward. He is ready and eager to face the Unknown, to challenge it, to play with it and even laugh at it. Through these pictures and stories of *Monsters of the Movies* we hope to help you venture out beyond the commonplace, into heaven or hell.

—JIM HARMON, Editor

# EDITORIAL- EAST



MONSTERS OF THE MOVIES EAST. Left to right: Marcia Glosner, Chris Claremont, Tony Isabella.

# "HERE WE GO AGAIN..."

A brief word or two by Tony Isabella

Who says you can't go home again?

You see, one of my first assignments for good ol' Marvel Comics, way back in the winter of 1972, was to put together the test section of MONSTER MADNESS #3. Which also turned out to be, gang, MONSTER MADNESS #ur, through no fault of mine. With its cancellation, I moved on to other projects: handling text material for our ever-expanding magazine line, proofreading our color comics, writing some comics (including, monster-fans, SUPERNATURAL, THRILLERS featuring THE LIVING MUMMY—unashamed plug), and, ultimately, editing the lion's share of our magazine line (working under the supervision of Roy Thomas and the welcome advice of Marv Wolfman). All of which has brought me full circle to MONSTERS OF THE MOVIES, the magazine which sprang from the success of MONSTER MADNESS #3. I'm home again.

The exact title is "East Coast Editor," which either means I reside in Manhattan or am responsible for the Atlantic coastline. I haven't figured out which. Actually, my function is to lavish all sorts of tender loving care on the material Sunny Jim Harmon—see previous page—sends us from California to fill this magazine. Of course, I get some very large help from two unsung heroes that I feel like singing about here.

First is Assistant Editor Chris Claremont. Chris and I really go back. In 1969, working as kind of free-lance secretary to Roy Thomas, Chris rejected my first submission to Marvel! No eyebrow-lifting there, folks; it was one of the most helpful rejection letters I've ever received. Chris proofreads the bulk of the MONSTERS OF THE MOVIES contents and assists in myriad other areas.

He's indispensable to this magazine and a pretty fair scripter in his own right. Witness GIANT-SIZE DRACULA, the double-size comic he's currently lending his talents to.

When Chris has finished the initial preparation of MOM's contents, the articles and photos are delivered into the capable and lovely hands of Marcia Glosner. This is not to say that the rest of her is not equally capable and lovely. In fact, she is taller than Tony Isabella, prettier than Marv Wolfman, and able to leap Jim Harmon at a single bound. She designs the graphic layouts of MONSTERS OF THE MOVIES and supervises their production. What, you may ask, are graphic layouts? Well...

One last point of interest. The long weekend of July 31 thru August 5 will see the historic meeting of Editors West and East at the star-studded San Diego (California) Comic Convention. You'll be able to meet and rap with such luminaries as Roy Thomas, Jim Harmon, Tony Isabella, Steve Englehart, Mike Friedrich, Frank Brunner, and Mike Royer. You'll also find a few lesser lights—such as Ray Bradbury, Milton Caniff, Gene Roddenberry, and Charles Schulz—wherever they are! The whole shenanigan's being held at the El Cortez Hotel at 7th and Ash Streets in downtown San Diego, and advance/fall membership is \$7.50, sent to San Diego Comics Convention, P.O. Box 17066, San Diego Ca. 92117. (The price is slightly higher at the door—and, of course, you can pay less if you're merely going for one day, but the advance membership is your best bet.) See you there?

That's it, editorial-wise, people. You've got nearly a whole magazine left to savor, so go to it already!

# MISSED ANY MONSTERS LATELY?

DRACULA! ZOMBIE!  
SHANG-CHI! SATANA!  
GABRIEL, DEVIL-HUNTER!  
LILITH! KA-ZAR!

MORBIUS! CONAN!

FRANKENSTEIN!

And, of course,  
THE CRAZY  
NEBBISH!



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# KARLOFF SPEAKS!



Once again writer-actor Ron Haydock returns us to THE RAVEN CASTLE set for the conclusion of his interview with Boris Karloff—the Frankenstein Monster, Dr. Fu Manchu and so many other monsters we came to know and love.

by Ron Haydock

A classic portrait of Boris Karloff as the Monster in SON OF FRANKENSTEIN.

Actually Karloff had played the Frankenstein Monster one more time other than his three Universal films. This fourth portrayal happened in 1962, shortly before he began working in *THE RAVEN*, when he appeared with Lon Chaney and Peter Lorre in *Lizard's Leg and Owl's Wing*, an hour-long episode of CBS-TV's popular adventure series *ROUTE 66*, which starred George Maharis and Martin Milner as a couple of roving heroes who found all sorts of weekly dangers travelling that famous American highway. In the particular *ROUTE 66* teleplay, scripted by Sterling Silliphant and broadcast appropriately enough on October 26, only a few nights before Halloween, Karloff, Chaney and Lorre were seen meeting at a Chicago motel to talk about making some new horror films. Discussing what type of horror film to make though, they had some disagreements. Karloff contended they should make psychological horror films because he said audiences just weren't interested anymore in melodramatic monsters like Frankenstein's Monster, *The Wolf Man* or *The Mummy*. Chaney and Lorre, on the other hand, disagreed with Karloff about the present day values of classic horror, to settle their dispute and put their opposing viewpoints to an actual, real-life test, they agreed they would all dress up as their famous horror movie selves of yesteryear and then go out into the motel—where there was a convention in progress. If the old melodramatic monsters failed to frighten anybody, then they would agree to make the psychological type of horror film Karloff was suggesting. But if on the other hand connoisseurs ran amok at seeing the classic monsters once again, they would agree to make more pictures of the kind Chaney and Lorre were arguing for.

The verbal combat finished for the moment, Karloff soon enough began stalking the convention as the Frankenstein Monster, while Chaney began his own reign of terror as the Wolf Man, *The Mummy* and *The Hunchback*. Peter Lorre threatened connoisseurs strictly as his own sinister gnomelike self. And as the screams of the connoisseurs began echoing shrilly throughout the Chicago motel, Karloff realized he had no choice but to relinquish his argument in favor of psychological horror and go along with Chaney and Lorre; melodramatic monsters were still the best frightening in the business.

Most serious film historians and devotees of the Horror Film only mildly cast an eye on this *ROUTE 66* appearance of Karloff as the Monster, refusing to consider this an actual Karloff-Monster portrayal at all. The argument is that in the television play Karloff was not the Monster at all but only Karloff playing Karloff who then became the Monster. Karloff himself never mentioned this Monster role while talking with me that *RAVEN* afternoon about his Frankenstein appearances. All during our discussions, he always referred to his three roles as the Monster, never his four roles. Still, *Lizard's Leg and Owl's Wing* was an interesting, offbeat addition to the saga and served as a sort of prelude to Karloff's *TARGETS*, a 1968 feature film by the then novice writer-director Peter Bogdanovich, who later received much wider acclaim when he directed *THE LAST PICTURE SHOW*—from the excellent novel by Roy McNally—and the current *PAWN MOON*.

In *TARGETS* Karloff played an aging horror star named Byron Orlock and the theme of this extremely offbeat "horror" film was the contrast between the horror of



THE COMEDY OF TERRORS was made at about the same time as *THE RAVEN* (the time of this interview). In this charming portrait, weird left to right are Boris Karloff, Peter Lorre, and Vincent Price. Brandling is Best Rainbow. No laughing when the flash powder goes off, fellas.

The film Boris Karloff was working on when I interviewed him was *THE RAVEN*, the weird tale of three master magicians who practised their sorcery in primitive 16th century England, in an era that was virtually ruled by superstition, magic and fear; and playing the trio of scoundrels were Boris Karloff as Dr. Scambus, Vincent Price as Dr. Brasmus Craven and Peter Lorre as Dr. Bedloe. In the story, Lorre had been magically transposed into a large human raven by Karloff for having the gall to dare challenge Karloff's unlimited powers. As

a human raven then, Lorre sought Price's aid in reversing the Karloff spell, and the subsequent interplay between the three powerful magicians—and their fantastic battle for power over one another—formed the core of the *Richard Marquand* screenplay—which also utilized such famous screen shock devices as return from the dead, hypnosis and medieval torture. There was even an amazing mind-boggling war of magic waged between Karloff and Price at the climax of the story—who had been living with his daughter Estelle (Olivia Sturgess) and

mourning the apparent death of his wife, the beloved Lorraine (Hazel Court).

"We're going to be shooting the war of magic this afternoon," publicist Roy Smith told me. "That's the scene they're getting ready for now," he continued, indicating all the activity on the set. "We should be filming that scene in half an hour or so." Then he excused himself to move back through the soundstage to greet the first group of visitors who were just then arriving on the set to see "Frankenstein" in person.

Byron Orlon's monster movie worlds and the real horror—and terror—of snipers in the real everyday world. Although the film has since gained quite a worthy reputation with film critics—if that's something to aspire to—in its original release to the movie theatres *TARGETS* didn't fare well at all. Audiences stayed away, obviously deciding that it was much more comfortable (and escapable) to see a regulation-type Boris Karloff horror film with creepy castles, evil-eyed serpents and towering man-made monsters rather than dare Bogdanowitch's celluloid comment about the real horrors loose in the world we "know so well." *TARGETS*, unlike any other Karloff film, was hardly escapist entertainment, even though Karloff did play a character very much like his own true self, a star of horror films.

In real life, of course, Boris Karloff was hardly a monster. His main interests were poetry and gardening, world affairs and the legitimate stage. He was keenly aware of the human condition and perhaps, on reflection that at least partly explains why his many portrayals of dark terrors like ghouls, zombies and Frankenstein Monsters are still so shudderingly and fondly remembered. Beneath the gruesome makeup of the unearthly creatures he played so many times on the screen, there was always an innate humanness ever present in that character. A very human quality that always came through. Even in his portrayals of treacherous mad scientists, he could always evoke some sympathy from the audience.

Away from the genre of horror films, though, Karloff always more than held his own. He was an accomplished actor who could stand right along with the very best of them: dramatic immortals like George Arliss, for example, with whom he shared billing in MGM's *THE HOUSE OF ROTHSCCHILD*, or comedic talents like Danny Kaye with whom he starred in *THE SECRET LIFE OF WALTER MITTY* for Paramount. But it was certainly the myriad weird worlds of filmed terror and cinema horror where he gained his greatest, lasting fame.

Born in Great Britain in the latter part of the 19th century, he decided on a stage career rather than follow family tradition and enter the service of the Queen and ~~the Commonwealth~~ —as most aspiring actors do — until he scored and rose to a world acclaim in the guise of a man-made monster whose father was Frankenstein, whose mother was lightning. But Karloff was an actor who soon—as he often did in the decades to come—peeled away the Mary Shelley-inspired greenish-gray greasepaint to reveal that he was indeed something more than only an actor of monster roles. He *was*, beneath it all, and in reality, a very cultured, kindly Englishman.

But like he said . . .

He scared people.

*THE RAVEN*'s assistant director stepped boldly into our discussion that afternoon. "We're ready for your next scene, Mr. Karloff," he said.

Boris Karloff nodded. "Thank you," he said. And with a glance in my direction, he added, "It's back to work for me, my friend." Then, once again, he stepped back into the macabre world of Edgar Allan Poe's Raven Castle—where at the far end of the large main hall of that bleak, fog-draped fortress of ancient evil his secerous opponent was eagerly awaiting him, standing tall and regally ominous in his own necromancer's gown, Vincent Price.



Karloff as the Rodopic Gheroul Wilson Pur-Baugh operating Karloff's special effects machinery, while observably Dennis Colby as Fal-Li-Sie, and Charles Stewart as Terry Granville.

Karloff turned and whispered back, "Vincent is in for a bloody rough time if with this war between us now. He doesn't know it but I've got a couple of secret magic flashbacks up my sleeve!" And a few moments later, then surrounded by the movie cameras, technicians, stagehands, fellow actors and actresses, and director Roger Corman, Karloff and Price began acting out their rather spectacular battle of sorcery and black magic at Raven Castle. And the phony stone walls of that towering, weather-worn, doom-scarred, Poe-inspired edifice of evil faithfully numbered and thundered that afternoon with the

awesome feats of their occult conflict, as they each conjured and struggled with one another for final, overwhelming supremacy of the Dark Realm.

While they were waging their magical war, I glanced over to the bleacher section for a moment and saw that by now almost every last one of those seats was filled with studio guests—with children and young people in the majority. As Roy Smith had said earlier that day, there were an awful lot of people in the area who wanted to meet Boris Karloff and watch him making a new film. As it was, the studio could allow in only so many at a time

and of course would never have been able to shoot the film long enough to accommodate everyone who wanted to see.

When Karloff and Price were eventually through filming the master long shots of their diabolical war, and *Floyd Crosby* and his camera crew, plus other technicians and movie people began preparing to move in for closeups and medium-close shots, Karloff found himself a comfortable seat near the bleacher section and began chatting away with the people, who soon began approaching him, a few—especially the very young—approaching

WARNER

BORIS

## OLAND vs. KARLOFF

CHARLIE  
CHAN  
AT THE  
OPERA

Produced by Warner Bros.  
Directed by Edward L. Cahn  
Written by George Marion Jr.  
Music by Max Steiner  
Cinematography by Ernest Haller  
Edited by Walter R. Rosen  
Art Direction by Cedric Gibbons  
Production Design by William A. Horner  
Costumes by Irene Sharpenburg  
Sound by Harry Stradling  
Title Song by Leo Robin and Harry Warren  
Song by Leo Robin and Harry Warren  
Song by Leo Robin and Harry Warren

WITH  
KEYE LUCE  
CHARLOTTE HENR  
THOMAS BECH  
MARGARET IRVING

In CHARLIE CHAN AT THE OPERA, Karloff played an opera star type, he sang, with a disguised intent but of course a misleading one.

with some trepidation. Through all the autograph signing and movie talk, Karloff seemed to be greatly enjoying himself. He was courteous to everyone. During the remainder of that afternoon, and on the other afternoons to come, he continued meeting fans; I learned later that, after *THE RAVEN* was completed, Karloff said he was very glad producers James Nicholson and Samuel Arkoff had let the guests in. It wasn't very often visitors were allowed on sets. Especially in drives.

George Pal, producer of classic science fiction and fantasy films like *DESTINATION MOON*, *THE WAR OF THE WORLDS*, *THE TIME MACHINE* and *ATLANTIS, THE LOST CONTINENT*, once said of Karloff that he was in fact someone you instinctively wanted to meet. Lon Chaney, in a special memorial book *The Franken-science Monster*, edited by Forrest J. Ackerman and published by Ace Books shortly after Karloff's death in England on February 2, 1969, commented that it must have indeed been a blessing to Karloff to have so many people care about him at his age. To me however, Boris Karloff was probably the grandest horror showman to ever don a medieval skull cap, gesture hypnotically or stalk through a mad scientist's laboratory in size 24 boots. He could evoke a chill from an audience and create suspense with simply the arching of a well-calculated eyebrow and he didn't at all need to rely on grotesque makeups alone to frighten. His main basic power always lay in suggestion. It was never so much

what he actually did in films that caused adrenaline to pump and heartbeats to quicken with a chill, but what he might do.

Karloff himself always had a rather negative view of horror films as opposed to terror films, much preferring to think along the terms of the latter variety. Horror could make you physically upset or ill, he contended, whereas terror was actually psychologically frightening. And even though he did become known as the King of Horror Films, his popularity and appeal, ironically enough, had always stemmed from the terror—not horror—he always eschewed in his many roles of villainy.

During other discussions with him, he said that besides *FRANKENSTEIN*, his own favorites of all his films were the trio of chillers he made for producer Val Lewton at RKO-Radio Pictures in the middle forties. *THE BODY SNATCHER*, *BEDLAM* and *ISLE OF THE DEAD* stressed a nerve-snapping terror and moody suspense rather than any kind of repulsive shock horror treatment and Karloff made particular mention of the carefully created, quietly deadly atmosphere of these films: an atmosphere that suggested diabolism, and created just the proper mood for the oftentimes subtle terrors and frights that were coming up in the very next few frames of picture.

"I have always felt close to the Monster, you know," he said, "but the films for Val Lewton... Well, I think we achieved real terror there."

Karloff had also relied on his own particular individual tastes and preferences in what was frightening when he edited *Tales of Terror* and *And The Darkness Falls*, collections of "horror" stories published by the World Publishing Company in 1944 and 1946. These volumes of weird tales terrify rather than horrify and the collections are regarded as two of the finest of their kind ever assembled. Karloff's *THRILLER* television program, as well, had its accent on stories of suspense and terror—though horror monsters such as a walking corpse or vampire creature did turn up, occasionally.

As it happened for me, Boris Karloff was actually the star of one of the very first horror films I had ever seen, *THE HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN*, released in 1944 by Universal Pictures. Here Karloff played a quite mad scientist named Dr. Gustav Neumann who had located the frozen-alive remains of both The Wolf Man (Lon Chaney) and Frankenstein Monster (Glenn Strange) in an ice cavern and then brought them both back to horrendous life. In this memorable film Karloff also gave new life to Count Dracula (John Carradine), whose pale-

ton he was exhibiting in a sideshow.

Of course Karloff didn't come by the horror circus either through inheritance or plain hard work. He commanded *The Hunchback*, J. Carroll Naish to murder the true owner of the horror show (George Zucco) and then Karloff took the man's place, as well as the man's monsters. Up till that time, Karloff had been serving a life sentence in prison for having committed scandalous crimes against society; it seems he was dedicated to following in the footsteps of Dr. Frankenstein, his idol. In the end, though, after reviving monsters better left dead, and commanding mauders here, there and everywhere, Karloff also didn't bother keeping his promises to *The Wolf Man* and *The Hunchback* about curing their individual afflictions. Which led to the obvious result. He died.

Karloff was insidiously, subtly villainous in *HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN* and his wonderful portrayal of the quite mad Dr. Neumann is still indelibly etched on my mind after all these years.

For that I am truly grateful.



# COPE...MONSTERSCOPE...MONSTERSCOPE...MONSTE

*The Rats Are Coming! The Werewolves Are Here!* In Producer William Markin's new horror drama in color about a rather dislodged family of werewolves living in a forbidding 19th-century English castle. Starring Hope Stanaway, Berwick Kaler and Jacqueline Skarvelas. Markin's weird cinema tale tells not only of the Mooney family's curse of lycanthropy but also of their horrible collection of rodents which in one sequence is turned loose on *Invaders*, playing the husband. Producer Markin, incidentally, has been suggesting to theatre managers that while playing the horror flicks they also run a special tie-in contest: Win A Live Rat For Your Mother-In-Law!

There's ancestral werewolf mystery too in *A Werewolf Among Us* by Dale R. Koontz (Ballantine Books; \$1.25). The hero of Koontz' neatly paced, offbeat science fiction murder mystery is Baker St. Cyr, a cybernetic who part man and part computer. St. Cyr travels to the resort planet Darna to solve the baffling case of the Alderman Family, who are getting their throats torn open one by one, by an unseen creature who, St. Cyr deduces against all logic, must be a werewolf.

Mario Bava's *Curse of the Living Dead, Fangs of the Living Dead*—with Anne Ekhberg—and *Revenge of The Living Dead* form a triple avalanche of horror films about vampires and witchcraft that are all three playing on a *Living Dead* triple bill at movie houses all across the country. In fact, the considerate producers of the films have been warning one and all that because of the terrifying nature of this triple horror show, they are providing a free insurance policy that will insure the sanity of every patron who enters the theatre.

Darren McGavin as reporter Carl Kolchak meets up with more fiendish terror in *The Night Killers*, a sequel to the enormously successful ABC-TV movie *The Night Stalker*.

## What's Happening In Horror & Fantasy News & Reviews

by Ron Haydock

and its followup *The Night Stranger*. The script for the new horror venture was written by Richard Matheson, who scripted the previous two Kolchak films from characters created by Jeff Rice—who wrote the novel on which the original film was based—and William F. Nolan.

*Planet of The Apes* is scheduled to become a CBS Television series this coming Fall.

At 20th Century-Fox, producer Irvin Allen has set *The Towering Inferno* as his next feature length science fiction terror film, with script by *String of Pearls*—who wrote the Boris Karloff-Lon Chaney-Peter Lorre episode of television's *Route 66* a decade ago. Allen is also talking with television powers about a new series of special monthly science fiction disaster movies that would each set Earth on the brink of

various kinds of total destruction.

William Castle's latest Paramount venture into the macabre is *Shanks*, which he describes as pretty much of a takeoff on his own horror films. Starring the noted mime Marcel Marceau, *Shanks* has only 24 lines of dialogue with Marceau playing two separate characters in the film: a deaf puppeteer of the Theatre of the Absurd, and an old man.

Ron Haydock is scripting *Odds On* with Ray Dennis Steckler, who will also produce this film version of Michael Crichton's suspense novel about a trio of modern bandits working with a highly sophisticated computer to plot out a robbery of a plush Las Vegas hotel and casino. Steckler has been talking with Gordon Scott about starring in the venture.

Meanwhile back in Hollywood, Jim Barnes and Kirk Alyn are working up a new vampire film which would see Alyn, super-hero of many movie serials, once again taking to the air, this time as a vampire.

Also in Hollywood, movie music impresario Andre Brimmer is seeing *The God Monster*, a colorful western monster film about a giant death-like monster that spreads death and destruction around Carson City, Nevada, where the horror film was made.

*The Touch of Satan* has been racking up considerable notice wherever it plays. Starring Michael Berry, Emily Melley and Lee Amber, *The Touch*! Satan asks the rather provocative question—What would you give to live forever?—and then goes on to show what did happen to young, desirable Melissa Strickland, who hasn't aged a day since the night 108 years ago when she made



George Segal in a vicious vein, about to be opened on in Warner Bros. mini-theater, *The Terminal Man*.



As the saying goes, when it comes, don't shut it out. And we all gotta go sometime. Some of us even get to come back, as in *Plan Beyond the Grave*.

an eternal youth pact with Satan in exchange for her sister Lucinda's salvation from the tortures of a witches' death by burning.

*The Twilight People* stars John Ashby, Pat Woodell and a grotesque assortment of horror monsters like an ape man, bat man, wolf girl, pamper woman, tree woman and even an atoleto man. These monsters are the products of experiments headed by Charles Macaulay, who plays a scientist trying to build a race of super human beings on a South Pacific Island. Jon Martin—who starred on early television as the wise cracking space cadet Roger Manning on *Tom Corbett, Space Cadet*—is also starred in the *Eddie Romero* production.

Mary Shelley's famous characters gain a new life in *Frankenstein Unbound*, a science fantasy novel by Brian Aldiss, serialized in the Sci Fi

mag, *Fantastic Stories*. Aldiss' remarkable and entertaining tale of wonder tells about one Joseph Bodenland of the year 2020 who becomes trapped in a space-time warp and then suddenly finds himself transported back to 1816 in Geneva, Switzerland, where he meets face to face not only Victor Frankenstein, the Monster and other characters from the Shelley novel, but Mary Shelley, Lord Byron and Percy Bysshe Shelley as well. It is Bodenland in fact who at one point convinces Mary Shelley to finish writing her story of Frankenstein. She had put it aside for other pursuits and was not necessarily going to complete the work.

In *Brian Aldiss' Frankenstein Unbound*, both the real and imaginary people involved with Shelley's Frankenstein exist in a simultaneous universe.



Hmm... Don't look like a zombie in the heart is gonna do much good. (In fact it's not, this is Lady Frankenstein, and if at first you don't succeed...)

# ONSTERSCOPE...MONSTERSCOPE...MONSTERSCOPE

# OPE...MONSTERSCOPE...MONSTERSCOPE...MONSTE

seven nights a week over the CBS Radio Network. The new exercise in audio terror is being produced by *Hymus Brown*, the highly acclaimed veteran of radio drama whose past credits include *Inner Sanctum*, *Bulldog Drummond*, and *Terry and The Pirates*.

While filming *Madhouse* for American-International Pictures in London, Vincent Price, another veteran of dramatic radio, recorded a series of horror stories for BBC Radio. Price, who has written books on the fine art of cooking, starred in one episode about a restauranteur whose customers mysteriously disappear one by one and then turn up later as the main course served to other customers.

Dr. Janet Troniz of the University of Nevada at Las Vegas was the main speaker last March at a special seminar on Dracula. Entitled *Dracula, Vampires and Things Like That*,



The classic scene, a vampire and his victim, from *Dracula* (1931).

the seminar was sponsored at the university by The Medieval Colloquium, a group of students, faculty and community residents who are interested in the people and culture of the Middle Ages.

**Monstersines:** Warren Stein's *Original Monsters* (Box 25, Lakewood, NJ 07031; \$1 per copy) is a fine fan effort published irregularly, featuring pictorial reviews and informative articles on horror films.

Joseph Paris' *Brennan's Macabre* (26 Fowler St., New Haven, Conn. 06511; \$6 per copy) still leads the horror fiction field with more than 22 issues published. Brennan is himself a noted writer of weird tales like the horror gem *Canadian Backyard*.

Hammer Film's latest Dracula picture *The Satanic Rites of Dracula* will mark the last time Christopher Lee will play the classic vampire figure. In a recent newspaper an-

nouncement, Lee officially declared what has obviously been coming for awhile—he has definitely "hung up his fangs," so to speak—with this eighth appearance as Count Dracula (unless, if you count the *In Search of Dracula* documentary [for an in-depth report on Lee's decision and *The Satanic Rites of Dracula*, see Dan Guit's article elsewhere in this issue].

It is said that Lee once remarked that he might don the cape and trappings of the Count if a well-done version of Stoker's book were produced that would be as faithful as possible to the novel (the Harry Allam *Towers*/Jesus Franco *Count Dracula* of a few years back may have had Lee following Stoker's description, but the film was something of a disappointment).

Still upcoming is the Lee/Jean Collins co-starring *Dark Places*, the well-received by the British Film



The man has seen *A Taste of Hell*. (Ruff photo)

## FRANKENSCOPE:

When Mary Shelley first incorporated the concept of immortality into her novel *Frankenstein*, she could not have known just how immortal the creature built by Victor Frankenstein would remain. During recent months such titles for new Frankenstein movies as the following have crossed the desk of this writer: *Dr. Jekyll vs. Frankenstein* (starring Paul Naschy), *Frankenstein's Maker or Love*, Andy Warhol's graphically grisly *Flesh for Frankenstein* (in 3-D!), *Frankenstein's Dracula*, *The Invasion of Frankenstein* (an allegory between a bizarre rock star and the 1931 Karloff film), *Black Frankenstein* (new title for *Blackenstein*); *The Spirit of the Bee-Hive* (with a segment called "Dr. Frankenstein"); the Mexican film *La Invención de los Monstruos* ("The Invasion of the Monsters") and *Chabelo y Pepito contra los Monstruos* ("Chabelo and Pepito vs. the Monsters"); *Bonjour, Monsieur Frankenstein* (starring, of all people, Jerry Lewis); *Les Expéditions Étriquées de Frankenstein*; and *Frankenstein's Kampf Gegen die Teufelmonster* (mis-

leading German title for *Frankenstein*). Are these *Monsters*? Yet perhaps the most noteworthy and ambitious new Frankenstein film is that currently in production at 20th Century-Fox—*Young Frankenstein*.

For those of us who have been nostalgic mooning for the Frankenstein films of old produced at Universal during the Thirties and Forties, *Young Frankenstein* very well may be the actualization of our dreams. The movie is being filmed in traditional black and white and follows the plotlines of the early Karloff Frankenstein films—with one major exception. *Young Frankenstein* is a comedy, the script having been written by Gene Wilder and Mel Brooks.

Mel Brooks is also directing *Young Frankenstein*. Behind this man's name is an impressive list of film credits including *The Producers*, *The Twelve Chairs* and the current hit Western fantasy film *Biloxi Blues*. You might also remember him as the famed "2000 year Old-Man" of Carl Reiner's record albums. Brooks has

## "Young Frankenstein"

taken it upon himself to convert the *Young Frankenstein* tale, though poking fun at the old Universal films, is made with integrity and love. The film may be the best satire of the genre since the excellent *Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein* back in 1948.

Gene Wilder plays young Dr. Freddy Frankenstein while the role of the Monster has been ascribed to Peter Boyle. Boyle is best known for his role of the title character in *Jaws*. The make-up for the Monster is of the basic Universal mold, colored green and sporting a zipper rather than a scar on one cheek. Boyle shies away from interviews concerning the film, however, claiming that he does not want to become established as a horror film actor.

Bob Greenberg, the co-animator of John Lange's award-winning cartoon *Joshua and the Blob* and the man responsible for the terrific special optical effects in the new sci-fi sleeper *Dark Star*, visited the set of *Young Frankenstein* during the scenes spoofing the "blindman"

segment of *A Taste of Hell*. Boyle describes such scenes as the Monster holding out his porridge bowl to receive some soup. But the unseeing hermit misses the bowl and pours the hot soup in the Monster's lap. In another scene the blindman converses the Monster that fire can also be "good" and attempts to light the creature's cigar, but succeeds only at setting his thumb afame! (A special artificial thumb was strapped to Boyle's hand for this effect.) Since the Monster does not yet speak at this point in the film, all he says is a Karloff-like "Uhmnnnnnn!"

And, according to Bob Greenberg, "Uhmnnnnn" is the word on the set of *Young Frankenstein*. Everyone says this protracted great to one another—across, cameras, gups. As this writing no publicity stills have yet been released by 20th which accounts for their absence in this article. Until they are released, you'll have to wait with a patient "Uhmnnnnn"—and keep watching the pages of *Monsters of the Movies*.

# ONSTERSCOPE...MONSTERSCOPE...MONSTERSCOPE

# MONSTERSCOPE... MONSTE

Institute Monthly Film Bulletin) *The Wicker Man* in which Lee is co-starred with Ingrid Pitt (*Vampire Lovers*, *House That Dripped Blood*, *Countess Dracula*), getting a chance to use his reportedly fine singing voice for some of the sequences; the overdue *Horror Express* (*Panique En El Transiberiano*) which received a fine reception at the 1972 Sitges Film Festival, which co-stars Lee with his long-time co-star Peter Cushing and Telly Savalas.

At present, Mr. Lee is receiving excellent reviews for his performance as Charlton Heston's henchman Rochefort in *The Three Musketeers* and has just been cast in the next James Bond adventure *The Man With The Golden Gun*. So while he may not play Dracula anymore, it is obvious that Christopher Lee is not idle.

Neither is his colleague Peter Cushing. Besides co-starring with Lee in the latest Dracula film, Cushing is cast in the upcoming Amicus production *The Beast Must Die* along with Charles Gray (the evil warlock from *Devil's Bride* and *Blofeld of Diamonds Are Forever*); he has just completed a role as Dr. Van Helsing (the present day, the original or another descendant) in Hammer's co-production with Hong Kong film mogul Run Run Shaw (noted for his prolific kung-fu pictures) *Legend of the Seven Golden Vampires* (it's good kung fu fighters against evil vampires) and is in France working on a film suspected of being *Tender Dracula* or *The Confessions of a Blood Drinker*. Still awaiting release here is his latest appearance as Baron Frankenstein in *Frankenstein and the Monster From Hell*, directed by Terence Fisher.

# # #

Nearly every horror, fantasy, supernatural, science fiction or just plain nutty motion picture ever made is listed in *Reference Guide to Fantastic Films* compiled by Walt Lee. The gigantic three volume set lists each film alphabetically, with cast

and production credits and a very brief synopsis. There are some still photographs in evidence, but they serve mostly as decorations, and handsome ones at that. The three huge paperbound books are available as a set for \$28.00 or individually for approximately \$10.00 each. (Volume I covers titles beginning with A to F, Volume II covers G to O, and Volume III the rest of the alphabet.) Mr. Lee's whole work is done with efficiency and taste. His brief introduction reveals far more discriminating intelligence than most of the films he catalogues. He was assisted on the *Reference Guide* by his associate, Bill Warren, and by such diverse print sources as the *British Film Yearbook*, *The Film Collector*, and *The Great Radio Heroes* by Jim Harmon. While not a

work for the casual fan, every serious student can find a valuable tool in the *Reference Guide to Fantastic Films*, available only from its editor-publisher, Walt Lee, at Post Office Box 66273, Los Angeles, Calif. 90066.

# # #

Currently Playing Mudhouse (Vincent Price, Robert Quarry, Peter Cushing), *Sugar Hill* (Marki Bey, Robert Quarry), *The Lemon Grove Kids Meet The Monsters* (Ray Dennis Steckler), *Horror of Blackwood Castle* (Edgar Wallace), *The Beast and The Vixens* (Jean Gibson).

*Golden Voyage of Sinbad*, *The Resurrection*, *Diabolik Wedding*, *Torissa the Wild Girl*, *The House That Cried Murder*, *Legend of Boggy Creek*, *The Gorilla Gang* - and *The Flesh and Blood Show*.



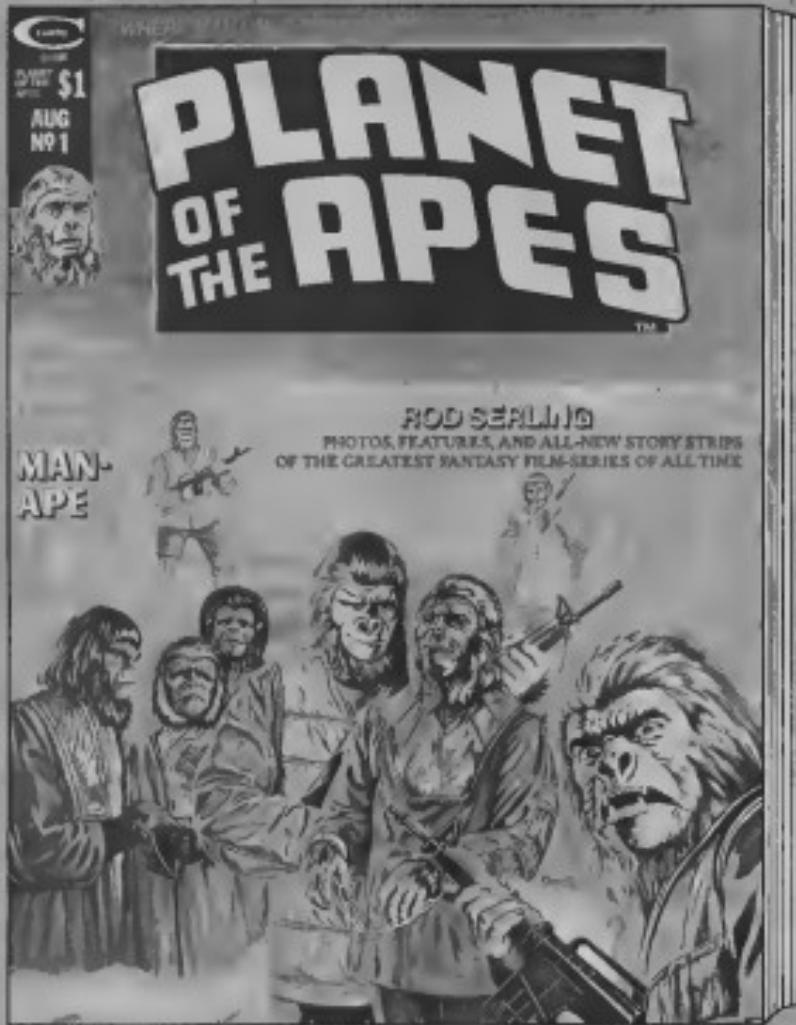
Alvin, The Devil's Dwarf. The tender side of "A young brat who's been an evil dwarf..." Well, they do say boys will be boys. Don't they...

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EVERYONE KNOWS THE DARK LEGEND OF DR. FRANKENSTEIN, AND THE UNLIVING BEING HE CREATED IN HIS LABORATORY. BUT, HERE WE HAVE A NEW TALE, THE STORY OF A DESCENDANT OF THE ORIGINAL FRANKENSTEIN, AND HIS TWISTED SERVANT, IGOR. THIS LATER FRANKENSTEIN WAS OLD, BUT STILL DEMANDING-- AND IGOR WAS SICK OF BEING A SERVANT, AND WISHED TO COMMAND. AND SO STARTS OUR TALE...

# MASTER AND SLAVE!!



WRETCH!

MOVE YOU  
WITLESS NON-ENTITY  
IT TAKES YOU  
YEARS TO WALK  
A MERE INCH!  
BRING ME THOSE  
TOMBS FOOL!  
AT ONCE!

YES  
MASTER!

DON'T YOU  
EVEN  
LISTEN TO  
ME ANYMORE?

I HELPED  
YOU WHEN YOU  
WERE IN NEED.  
WHEN YOU  
WERE A  
SHUNNED  
OUTCAST I  
CAME TO  
YOUR AID!

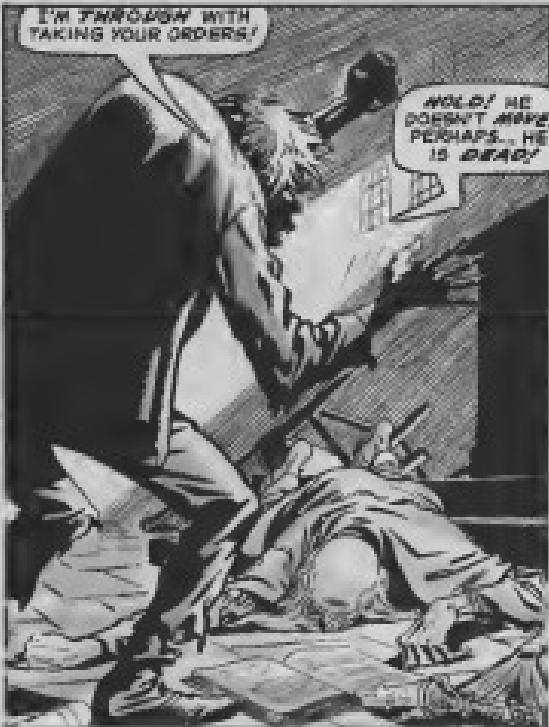
AND NOW THAT  
I AM OLD AND  
WEAK YOU  
WASTE MY  
PRECIOUS TIME  
WITH YOUR  
INEPTITUDE!

MORE THAN TWENTY  
YEARS I HAVE SERVED  
THE MASTER -- AND  
STILL HE INSULTS ME  
HE MAKES ME FEEL  
WORTHLESS!

ENOUGH! FOR TOO  
LONG I HAVE TAKEN THE  
LASHINGS OF YOUR  
PEBBLE TONGUE! NO  
MORE, YOU AGED  
DINE! I HAVE EARNED  
BETTER TREATMENT  
AT YOUR HANDS!

DO YOUR OWN SLAVING  
OVER THESE HEAVY  
BOOKS! NO LONGER AM  
I YOUR BEAST OF  
BURDEN!

WHAT! YOU  
DARE TO...  
HARBONATE MY  
HEART! THE  
PAIN...



THE DAYS PASS SLOWLY FOR  
IGOR. THE DEATH OF HIS  
HATED MASTER HAS BROUGHT  
A NEW FEAR TO THE  
HUNCHBACK... THE FEAR  
OF SOLONELINESS!



FOR SOON, THE PHANTOM IS FATHER  
TO THE DEAD, AND SOON...



BUT EGOR'S RECEPTION IS NOT WHAT HE EXPECTED...



THEY CHASED ME OUT OF THE VILLAGE...  
AS IF I WERE A COMMON THIEF!



THEY--THEY CAN'T REACH ME HERE! NOW I'M SAFE FROM THEM!

I--I MUST HAVE MY VENGEANCE!

THE FOOLS  
MUST SPROLLE AT  
MY FEET!

BUT... IT IS USELESS! I AM TOO WEAK TO CONQUER THEM. I MUST HAVE A SLAVE... AN UNBEATABLE CREATURE WHO CAN TEACH THE VILLAGERS SOME RESPECT!



YES! I CAN DO IT! I WILL COMPLETE FRANKENSTEIN'S EXPERIMENT, AND BUILD MY OWN SLAVE. THE MASTER'S NOTES ARE COMPLETE; I NEED ONLY FOLLOW HIS INSTRUCTIONS!



THE EQUIPMENT IS READY AND, I HAVE THE MOST IMPORTANT INGREDIENT-- THE BRAIN, FULLY PRESERVED, THAT THE MASTER PLANNED TO USE!



DAYS AND NIGHTS HE SPENT, DAY BY DAY, GATHERING THE PARTS HE NEEDED...



FINALLY...



ALL IS ASSEMBLED-- TONIGHT IT IS FINISHED-- TONIGHT, MY SLAVE SHALL LIVE!

SOON LIGHTNING FLARING  
AROUND THE CASTLE'S PARAPET  
AS THE MOST DEADLY  
EXPERIMENT IN HISTORY  
REPEATS ITSELF. THE HUGE,  
SHROUDED FORM LIES STILL  
UNMOVING IN THE CRACKLE  
OF DISCHARGING POWER.  
IT IS A MOMENT IN WHICH  
THE WORLD HOLDS ITS  
BREATH. A MOMENT THAT  
SEEMS TO LAST FOREVER!

SLOWLY UNMISTAKABLY,  
THE AWESOME CHANGE  
TAKES PLACE!

IT'S WORKING! IT IS  
WORKING! I KNOW  
IT IS!

HE LIVES! I HAVE  
CREATED A  
LIVING SLAVE!

I'VE DONE IT!  
I'VE SUCCEEDED  
WHERE THE  
MASTER FAILED!

WALK ACROSS  
THIS ROOM,  
MONSTER!

BUT IGOR'S TRIUMPH  
IS SADLY SHORT-LIVED!

BRING ME THOSE  
VOLUMES NOW...  
WHY DO YOU  
DAWdle SO?

— AND CLEAN  
UP THIS FILTH...  
DO YOU HAVE  
TO LIVE IN A  
PIG-STY LIKE  
A COMMON  
SWINE?

MORE WOOD  
IGOR! THIS  
CASTLE IS TOO  
DRAUGHTY FOR  
MY WORK!

ENOUGH,  
MONSTER!

I CREATED  
YOU TO BE  
MY SLAVE!  
YOU MUST  
SERVE ME!

THE  
BRAIN, IGOR!  
REMEMBER  
THAT  
CONVENIENT  
BRAIN!

THE BRAIN OF... THE  
ORIGINAL BARON  
FRANKENSTEIN!

POOR FOOL! YOU  
STILL DO NOT  
SEE HOW YOU  
WERE USED!

NOW  
MOVE,  
WRETCH!

TIMES MAY CHANGE, BUT THE  
MAN WHO WOULD BE MASTER...  
REMAINS ONLY A SLAVE!

# BETTER WATCH OUT!

## FRANKENSTEIN MONSTER LIVES AGAIN!

### MONSTERS UNLEASHED

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ON JUNE 25

GOBLINS, GHOSTS,  
GHOULS, and GOLDLINGS!!

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A VAMPIRE, A REVENGE, A SLAYER... TO TRIUMPH THE SPLENDID TEACHER OF THE DAY'S  
DARK AND DANGEROUS TEST."

—ROBERT RODRIGUEZ  
Creator of *Evil Dead*



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ON SALE JUNE 25. WHEREVER MAGAZINES ARE INSPIRED.

# "Dracula's Last Stand"

by Don Glut

What will probably be the last Hammer Dracula film to feature Christopher Lee will soon be released by Warner Brothers. The satanic *Rites of Dracula* originally announced under the ludicrous title *Dracula Is Dead... And Well and Living in London* has been completed in England, starring Lee and Peter Cushing (as a descendant of the original Dr. Van Helsing). The film was directed by Alan Gibson.

Why might this be Lee's final donning of cape and fangs for Hammer?

The answer comes from the deterioration of the Hammer Dracula films themselves. "I'm doing the next one under protest," Lee told Don Glut in an interview taped just after the US release of *Dracula A.D. 1972*. "I just think it's fitness. I can think of twenty adjectives — fatuous, pointless, absurd. It's not a comedy. At least with me it's not a comedy. But it's a comic title (then still called *Dracula Is Dead... etc.* —D.G.). I don't see the point. I don't see what they hope to achieve. I think it's playing down to people. I don't think people like it. I don't think people appreciate it either, because people who go to see a character like this go to see him seriously. They don't laugh at him. That I know. They may laugh at some of the things in the pictures, but they'll never laugh at me to my knowledge."



The problem with *The Satanic Rites of Dracula* is the same that has plagued most of the Hammer Dracula films, beginning with *Dracula Has Risen from the Grave* back in 1958. If you recall, every Dracula film beginning with *Risen* has not really been the Count's story. Hammer's writers design a tale about some secondary characters in the film and then search their brains for some way in which to insert Dracula himself. The results are always a hodge-podge with the Count having little to do and appearing irregularly in segments that seem to have been dropped into the film as padding. Granted, Lee's scenes in the original film in the series *Horror of Dracula* (1958) were minimal. Yet his presence dominated the entire picture and the whole story depended on what Count Dracula was doing, even off screen.

This failure to write Dracula movies about the titled character is a serious flaw. Yet there is another reason that Lee has become, to use his own word, "disenchanted" with the role of Count Dracula in the Hammer films. Dracula was in his element in the late Nineteenth Century. He was designed by Bram Stoker to work within the limitations of that time era. And as far as the Hammer product is concerned, that is the era which has become a tradition with the Count. But *Dracula A.D.* (1972) yanked him out of his own time (probably because the Hammer writers had exhausted their reserve of plots) and projected him into the 1970s.

Mercifully, Dracula's scenes were limited to an appropriately Gothic setting — the ruins of an old church. Though the rest of the film is replete with a distorted 1960s image of 1972 (apparently designed by onlookers instead of participants), Dracula's scenes appeared to be of Nineteenth Century vintage. This way the Count maintained his dignity despite a rather undignified adventure on the screen.

*The Satanic Rites of Dracula* destroys even the previous film's link with the last century. Dracula's base of sanguinary operations is now not in some darkened church or foggy graveyard but a modern day office building! And again to use the words of Christopher Lee, "...the character can only be described as a mixture of Howard Hughes and Dr. No."

Peter Cushing returns the modern-day van Helsing role he established in *Dracula A.D.* (1972) and Joanna Lumley portrays his beautiful daughter, Jessie. Van Helsing becomes involved when a Black Mass is performed at an old house and one of the participants turns out to be an official of the government. The house is alive (or, rather, Undead) with vampire girls and youthful guards in outfit reminiscent of the uniforms of Nazi stormtroopers. To Van Helsing's horror Count Dracula is back and has masterminded a plan to conquer the world after releasing a ghastly plague upon mankind. Only after a series of suicides, a fire that nearly destroys the Count, and the mass stakings of the vampire women, does Van Helsing finally destroy Dracula himself.

We won't give away the ending of the film; but we will give a hint. Dracula is eventually trapped by something that is very much a part of authentic vampire lore but has never been used in a motion picture before *Satanic Rites*. The ending involves the hawthorn bush, a plant that has the power (just like the rose and garlic) of keeping the vampires unable to leave his grave.

Is this the final demise of Hammer's Count Dracula?



Professor van Helsing (Peter Cushing) attempts to hold off Dracula with a silver crucifix and a gun loaded with silver bullets.

A vampire can die by the stake, by the sun—and by fire. As does Dracula (Christopher Lee) here in *Satanic Rites of Dracula*.



Is this the way it serves them, not with a bang but in a silent bush? Only time will tell...

concerned. The only possible way to keep Lee in the series is for Hammer to devote a bit more thought to their films and to attempt writing *Dracula* stories and not just plots into which the Count must somehow be fitted.

"...I just hope that people, whenever they see me play this character—which hopefully won't be very much longer because I've become so disenchanted with the way the character is presented in the films—I hope they realize that I am struggling against insuperable odds on occasions to remain faithful to the author's original

character."

Usually a new Hammer Dracula title is announced shortly after the completion of the last film in the series. But *The Satanic Rites of Dracula* was made toward the end of 1973 and still no new film has been revealed. Hammer was maintaining a schedule of one Dracula film per year and we are already well into 1974.

Will Christopher Lee's leaving the role mean that the series itself will come to a final end? We can only wait for Hammer to reveal the answer.

But then again, humans don't fare too well against the flames, either.



FHM

# THE MYTHS OF FRANKENSTEIN

A score of myths surrounding Frankenstein are exploded by Don Glut... What are Mary Shelley, Boris Karloff and Walter Brennan really like? You will find out all this and more. Read it here!



by Ron Haydock

There are more myths concerning Victor Frankenstein and his Monster than, perhaps, the number of parts that went into the creature's construction. Which is understandable when one considers all the plays, motion pictures, radio and television programs, novels, short stories, and comic strips that have been based upon the theme Mary Shelley presented back in 1818. Some of the more common Frankenstein misconceptions follow, and the truth about them will finally be told.

To begin:

1) The scene in the original (1931) *Frankenstein*, in which the Monster drowns the child Maria in the lake, was never shown in the United States.

Every true Frankenstein fan is probably familiar with the story of this classic scene's deletion from the film's final cut. Boris Karloff had requested that director James Whale excise the scene because, in the actor's opinion, it made the Monster appear to be too brutal. Listening to a tape of the original soundtrack transcriptions for the premiere release of *Frankenstein*, I found the questionable scene missing, as in the version shown on television. This implies that the scene was not shown—at least in American versions of the film—as far back as 1931. Since then there have been rumors that "complete" versions of the film did, in fact, exist, probably in the British release prints. The story was resolved when author Robert Bloch and monster movie authority Weaver Wright attended a screening of the film in Southern California during the Forties and, to their mutual shock, saw little Maria thrown into the lake. (There is an exciting photo showing the splash Maria makes as the Monster swings his arms down violently.)

2) Boris Karloff made good his vow in 1939 that *Son of Frankenstein* would feature his final performance as the Monster.

Karloff's vow to let the Monster rest, at least as regarded his own portrayal of the role, was noble enough. To Karloff the Monster was going nowhere in the Universal Films series—nowhere except down. However, the actor did, in fact, break his own promise on at least three occasions. In 1940, Karloff donned the familiar outfit of Frankenstein's Monster for an all-star baseball game played at Los Angeles' Gilmore Stadium. When the Monster's face is unwrapped at the climax of the 1958 film *Frankenstein—1970* its face is that of Karloff, technically constituting yet another appearance as the Monster, albeit an extremely brief one. And, finally, in 1962 Karloff surprisingly allowed himself to be made up in the uncomfortable Monster makeup for an appearance on television's *Route 66*—especially surprising considering the actor's advanced years.



A portrait painting of Mary Shelley, the young woman who first gave FRANKENSTEIN to the world

Boris Karloff Meets the Frankenstein Monster, who was an as yet unidentified actor portraying a very minor role, comes to life in ARBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET DR JEKYLL & MR HYDE

3) The terrific close-up of the Monster in the ice in *Frankenstein Meets the Wolf Man* was the make-up face of Bela Lugosi.

Perhaps Universal executives felt that Lugosi's face lacked the necessary power to convey a first impression of the monster's face to movie audiences. Or, maybe Lugosi simply refused to get into the artificial ice—either because of his age or health to stand so rigidly before the camera. Whatever the reason, that fantastic first appearance close-up was actually Eddie Parker, the stuntman who performed most of the Monster's action in that film.

4) Depending upon where you saw the film, *The Curse of Frankenstein* featured a "Creature" with either one, two, three or four eyes.

This fallacy has been published repeatedly since the original release of this Hammer film in 1957. In truth, there was only one make-up created for the Creature, although it is true that various versions of the film exported to other countries were more grisly in some scenes than the version released in the United States. The fact that the alleged variety of make-ups for the creature was a product of Hammer's publicity department was verified to me by Christopher Lee, the actor who played the part.

5) Mary Shelley, in selecting the name of her protagonist in *Frankenstein*, recalled the authentic German castle The Frankenstein and its legend about a Knight George slaying a man-eating monster during the Thirteenth Century.



The is no evidence that Mary ever heard of this castle in Darmstadt, Germany. To understand the real motivation for her selecting the name of Frankenstein, one must first realize that Mary Godwin (as she was named during her writing of the novel) worshipped her lover and future husband, Percy Shelley. Mary included much of Shelley's philosophy in *Frankenstein* and went to him for the name of her character. "Franken" was adapted from Benjamin Franklin, whom Shelley regarded as a "modern Prometheus" for bringing down the electricity from the heavens and giving to man. (Remember that Shelley had written *Prometheus Unbound*, and the full title of Mary's novel is *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus*.) The "stein" probably came from the character Wolfstein in Shelley's *St. Irvine*; Wolfstein, like Shelley himself, desired the secret of immortality. As for the "Victor" of Victor Frankenstein, that (according to Christopher Small in his book *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein: Tracing the Myth*) was a pen name often used by Percy Shelley.

6) Eddie Parker was the only stuntman to do the Monster's doubling in the Universal *Frankenstein* movies.

Humbly, I stand corrected! In an article I once wrote (under the pseudonym of "Don Grant"), I wrongfully attributed too many Monster credits to stuntman Eddie Parker's career. Actually, George DeNormand wore the famous make-up during the more strenuous scenes in *Bride of Frankenstein*—a fact recently discovered by *Masters of the Movies* editor, Jim Harmon. Ed Wolfe doubled for Karloff in the next film *Son of Frankenstein*. It was stuntman Dale Van Sickel doing the hoists in the zany comedy *Hellzapoppin*. Parker first stepped into the oversized boots in *The Ghost of Frankenstein* and continued through *Frankenstein Meets the Wolf Man*. Glenn Strange required no double, except in a brief scene in *Abbott & Costello Meet Frankenstein* when he broke his foot and was doubled by Lon Chaney, Jr.

7) The novel *Frankenstein* was set during the Nineteenth Century.

This is a very common misconception, probably because the book was written during the Nineteenth Century. However, Robert Walton's opening letter in the book is dated "Dec. 11, 17—" And this date was written after the story—told in flashback—occurred.

8) The coloring of the Monster in the Universal movies was green.

Wrong! This misbelief regarding the Monster's skin tone was the result of Don Post manufacturing a rubber *Frankenstein* Monster mask for the public. Actually, the Monster had a bluish-gray complexion, which photographed as dead flesh on black and white film. But Post, figuring that gray was not eerie enough for a commercially sold mask, established the color in green. The error remained. For you skeptics, Jack Pierce—who created the make-up—admitted its blue-gray coloring; Elsa Lanchester and Glenn Strange reported the fact to me personally, the latter stating that the color was changed in the Abbott and Costello film to a silver gray. Also, color photographs of Karloff on *Roads 66* show the Monster with a bluish gray face. Did Karloff himself suggest this?

9) There was but one silent movie version of *Franken-*

*stein*, made by Thomas Edison in 1910.

There were three silent adaptations of Mary Shelley's story. Edison's was the first. But Ocean Film Corporation made a version titled *Life Without Soul* five years later while Italy's Albertini Film—UCI made another, *Il Mostro di Frankenstein*, in 1930.

10) Boris Karloff, Bela Lugosi and Lon Chaney, Jr. never appeared together in the same film.

That is at least partially true—but not entirely. For there are scenes of Karloff as the Monster from the 1931 *Frankenstein* clipped into the Chaney/Lugosi film of 1942 *The Ghost of Frankenstein*.

11) In Mary Shelley's novel, the Monster was physically a beautiful creature.

At least that's what the producers of the television film *Frankenstein: The True Story* would have us believe. The following is Victor Frankenstein's first description of the Monster in the novel. You may decide for yourself whether or not the creature resembled actor Michael Sarrazin: "Beautiful! Great God! His yellow skin scarcely covered the work of muscles and arteries beneath; his hair was of a lustrous black, and flowing; his teeth of a pearly whiteness; but these luxuries only formed a more horrid contrast with his watery eyes, that seemed almost of the same colour as the dun-white sockets in which they were set, his shrivelled complexion and straight black lips." Beautiful!

12) Dwight Frye only acted in two *Frankenstein* movies, the original (as Fritz the hunchbacked dwarf) and the sequel, *Bride of Frankenstein*.

*Bela Lugosi's voice was used for that of the Monster in SON OF FRANKENSTEIN.*





This is Glenn Strange — not Bela Lugosi — carrying Boris Karloff in *FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN*.

No, he also had small roles in *The Ghost of Frankenstein* and *Frankenstein Meets the Wolf Man*, as one of the ubiquitous villagers.

13) No Universal Frankenstein movie was ever made in color.

That statement excludes, of course, the 1966 feature, *Monster Go Home!* But the third film in the series *Son of Frankenstein* seems to have been made in color, *Son* does not exhibit the stark blacks and whites of the other Universal films, but rather is rich in the grays that characterize a color film printed in black and white. The sets are very simple, as are the sets in other early color films (e.g. *Mystery of the Wax Museum*). And the fact that the Monster sported a fur vest in only this film could very well have been an attempt to add some color to the otherwise black clothing. There are rumors that director Roland V. Lee possesses a color work print of his *Son of Frankenstein*. Perhaps if he reads this... \*

14) The confusion of referring to the nameless Monster as "Frankenstein" began with the 1931 movie.

Surprisingly, the confusion goes back much farther — over a century; in fact, to the time of the very first Frankenstein stage play in 1823. Actor T. P. Cooke, who played the "Demon" in *Presumption; or The Fate of*

*Frankenstein*, continued the role for many a year. In the first play he was listed in the program as simply a blank (

) It was not long before he began to refer to his role, not as an ignoble blank, or even as a demon, but as the more impressive "Frankenstein."

15) Glenn Strange played the Frankenstein Monster in four Universal films and then retired from the role.

It was three Universal pictures: *House of Frankenstein*, *House of Dracula* and *Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein*. Certain books issued by Universal-International also attribute his name to the Monster in *Abbott and Costello Meet Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. But the actor who really wore the Monster's make-up in that latter film remains unknown. Glenn did, however, appear as the Monster in a publicity stunt atop a flagpole in Hollywood during the Fifties. He wore the outfit again on TV's *The William Show* and in a 1963 amateur movie made by this writer, *The Adventures of the Spirit*.

\* 16) Walter Brennan, that favorite old man of the silver screen, never a Frankenstein movie.

But he did! Brennan played the part of a "Neighbor" in *Bride of Frankenstein*, though his small role has been

out from the prints shown on television.

17) In Mary Shelley's novel, Victor Frankenstein was both a baron and a doctor.

Wrong on both counts. Victor Frankenstein was simply a young student who never acquires the noble title of "doctor." The closest he ever came to being a baron was his membership in a rather prominent family. "I am by birth a Gencsev," Victor begins his narrative in Chapter I, "and my family is one of the most distinguished of that republic. My ancestors had been for many years counsellors and syndics, and my father had filled several public situations with honour and reputation."

\*

18) The Frankenstein Monster, according to Mary Shelley, was created and given life in an old German castle.

Although Victor Frankenstein did impart life to his giant creation in Ingolstadt, a town in Germany, this fabulous accomplishment did not occur in a castle. Frankenstein's laboratory was in the simple quarters of an apartment, certainly a rather unimpressive setting when compared to the myriad castles and watch towers that have embellished themselves on the memories of the movie-going public ever since.

A lobby card poster for THE CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN. How many eyes does the Monster have? Count carefully.

"THE CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN"  
WILL HAUNT YOU FOREVER!

WARNER COLOR

WARNER BROS.

19) From the very first Universal Frankenstein movie in 1931, the lumbering giant was referred to on screen as "The Frankenstein Monster."

It seems unlikely but is true nevertheless that the first on screen references to the Monster as "The Frankenstein Monster" was in the later film *House of Frankenstein*. Until that time the character was simply known as "The Monster," "Frankenstein's Monster," "The Fiend," or other designation. *House* was also the first in which a character refers to the "Wolf Man" as such.

20) The only instances of the Monster speaking in the Universal films are in *Bride of Frankenstein* and at the climax of *The Ghost of Frankenstein*.

Although the Frankenstein Monster is generally considered to be a grunting and snarling or speechless brute, he has emitted dialogue in a considerable number of old Universal films. In *Heilzapoppin* the Monster spoke with courtesy to Martha Raye. He would have spoken with the voice of Ygor (Lugosi) in *Frankenstein Meets the Wolf Man* had not his dialogue been deleted before the picture's release. And, of course, he did have a few lines acknowledging Count Dracula as his "Master" in *Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein*.

There are more Frankenstein myths. But those will have to wait until another time to be exploded.



# The Last Of The

# Frankensteins

By Jim Harmon

The last of the classical Universal Frankenstein Monster players is Georges DeNormand, vigorous elder statesman of the fraternity of stuntmen. Today no other actor, no other stuntman, is alive who wore the legendary Jack Pierce make-up in the Frankenstein series of the thirties and forties. He is interviewed by the editor of Monsters of the Movies.

**MOM:** It came as a considerable surprise to me, George, when I learned you had doubled Boris Karloff as the Frankenstein Monster. I recall I was discussing your stuntwork in various action pictures when you mentioned having done the Monster. I'm sure this wasn't generally known. Why haven't you told about doubling Karloff as the Monster before?

**DeNormand:** No one asked me about it. I really didn't know you would be so interested, Jim. To me, it was just a few days' work quite a few years back. Of course, it was a pleasure to work with Boris Karloff and I considered it an honor to double him, just as I have felt about doubling a lot of other great stars.

**MOM:** Who are a few of the other actors you have performed stunts for?

**DeNormand:** Pat O'Brien, Spencer Tracy, Freddie March... Of course, I've been a double for a lot of western stars — Buck Jones, Tim McCoy, Whip Wilson, Tom Mix...

**MOM:** It has been said Tom Mix never used a double...

**DeNormand:** Every actor in the movies who has done any kind of action picture has used a double. The studio insisted on it. If Boris Karloff or Tom Mix broke a leg, the whole picture would shut down and hundreds of people would be out of work. If I broke my leg doing something for one of them, they got another stuntman. You know that, Jim.

**MOM:** Yes, I know. I'm just trying to ask leading questions. Did you ever break a leg?

**DeNormand:** Well, I hurt my leg pretty badly doing a fall out of a sixth story window for Freddie March.

**MOM:** No not?

**DeNormand:** There was a net. Then another net below that one in case we missed the first one. Then in case we missed the second one, there was an ambulance ready to take us to the morgue.

**MOM:** It sounds like you worked close enough to sudden death to be right at home in a horror picture.



George DeNormand, dear of the Hollywood stuntmen and one of the few men in hulking silent-town to wear the legendary Jack Pierce Frankenstein make-up.

Which one of the Frankenstein pictures was it that you doubled Karloff?

**DeNormand:** I wasn't paying much attention to titles then. I moved from one picture to another too fast. The first thing I did was down in some kind of pit... Henry White was the director.

**MOM:** That must have been *The Bride of Frankenstein*. The Monster is in a well beneath a burned out nail.

**DeNormand:** Yes, that sounds right. The thing I remember most vividly is getting into that make-up. It took hours. I sat in one chair and Karloff sat in the other. Jack Pierce, a real artist, made up Boris, and I drew his assistant, Otto Lederer. He followed the make-up step by step on me. Otto was a big, good-natured fellow, always cracking jokes. It broke up the tedium of sitting in the chair so much.

**MOM:** What else do you remember about doubling as the Frankenstein Monster in *Bride* besides being down in the pit or well?

**DeNormand:** I remember there was one scene where Frankenstein — that's me — goes nuts and starts to smash up everything in this laboratory.



In a lighthearted moment, Mr. DeNormand converses with **MOM** editor, Jim Harmon. Their mutual friend just seems to be using for the ride.

**MOM:** The puns refer to the Monster as the Frankenstein Monster, George. It is the doctor who is Frankenstein.

**DeNormand:** Well, we all called the old boy "Frankenstein." I'm pretty sure even Karloff did.

**MOM:** Is there anything else you can tell me about doing the picture?

**DeNormand:** Well, there is a funny story about the make-up. My first day, Boris comes up to me and says, "George, we had better prepare ourselves." Prepare ourselves for what? I wondered. Boris made it sound like it was going to be pretty awful. But I can't tell that story here.

**MOM:** Why not?

**DeNormand:** I am writing a book about my whole career in the movies with a collaborator. Now I'm perfectly willing to give away all my secrets to the readers of *Monsters of the Movies* but my collaborator insists that I hold back some of the good stories for the book.

**MOM:** What is the name of the book?



Some hours it just isn't appropriate. We always wondered why Jim hasn't been earning our postcards...

**DeNormand:** The working title is *Making of a Stun-*  
*stein*. We may change it. But it will be the story of George DeNormand. Your readers can look for my name.

**MOM:** And your collaborator's?

**DeNormand:** Sure.

**MOM:** Can you tell me if you ever worked on any other horror films?

**DeNormand:** I did the stuntwork for *Henry Hull in Werewolf of London*. You know, I had hair all over me and I jumped off high ledges down onto people. Now on that picture there occurred something so unusual, so unbelievable that... But I can't tell that one either.

**MOM:** The goes into the book too?

**DeNormand:** That's right.

**MOM:** I appreciate that you do have certain commitments in these masters, George, and that you don't mean to tantalize us — although you do. I do want to thank you for taking time to pose for these special pictures for us, and for drawing the guise of the Frankenstein Monster once again for the first time in over thirty years.

# Big, Big Monsters

by Jim Harmon

Movie monsters and other creatures from the comic strips of the thirties and forties lurked in the pages of these little hardbound volumes that preceded comic magazines as young America's favorite reading delight. An article by Jim Harmon, not only the editor of *Monsters of the Movies*, but who with his other head is known to hardcore readers and TV talk show viewers as "Mr. Nestalgia."

Bela Lugosi gazed out of the cover of *Chandu the Magician* with his usual air of omniousness, although he was supposed to be a good magician. This was one of those little volumes usually called a "Big, Little Book." To be technical, *Chandu* was a Saalfield Publication, a competitor to the Whitman line which owned the "Big, Little Books" trade mark. Most people didn't make such fine distinctions. They just read Big, Little Books avidly for stories about invisible men of magic like Chandu, space explorers like Buck Rogers and Flash Gordon, and such other diverse characters as Dick Tracy, Mickey Mouse and the Lone Ranger.

One recurring element in many of these stories—from movies and other sources—was the Monstrous Man. There was the Spider, otherwise known as "The Lame One," a shambling, evil creature who was no relation to the cloaked hero of the thirties—also called the Spider—who fought Dick Tracy in an adaptation of the *Dick Tracy* movie serial titled *Dick Tracy and the Spider Gang*. The book was illustrated with still photos from the serial rather than from Chester Gould's cartoon strip.

Other movie serial heroes (although in their original comic strip form) fought other menaces—Buck Rogers had to deal with the Super-Dwarf of Space as well as Kiler Kane, and Flash Gordon always seemed to be battling Ming the Merciless, not to mention the Lion Men, Ape Men, Hawk Men, Blue Men and at least one Witch Queen.

Someone might ask at this point: What exactly is a Big, Little Book? Well, I'm glad you asked that question. They were volumes 3½ by 4½ inches, by about 1½ inches thick. (Some had 428 pages.) The covers were heavy cardboard, wrapped in paper with full color paintings or drawings. The insides were all in black and white, and the classic format was one page of text on the left hand page and one picture on the right hand page with a caption underneath it—like that, page after page, through the whole book. (There were some variations, of course, but that was the general format.) They were the closest thing to comics you could get without actually being comics. Eventually, readers preferred to get real comics in color, with balloons of dialogue. But for a time in the thirties—their own time—the Big, Little Books were king.

To readers then, they seemed to be of more permanent,

lasting value than a "mere" magazine. Parents, uncles, and aunts thought them more "respectable" than comic magazines and gave them as gifts. They were thought to encourage the reading of real books. (No doubt they did—but reading anything, even comics, probably encourages more reading of everything.) Besides all these wholesome values, Big, Little Books were wonderful fun and are still treasured today by those who have read them when they first came out—and by some who have just recently discovered them.

A word now about prices: Like comic books, Big, Little Books have an inflated collector's value. The first issue of *The Fantastic Four* costs about \$60.00 today, and the first issue of *Marvel Comics* where the Human Torch and Sub-Mariner began some thirty-five years ago has been priced at \$4,000.00. However, the Big, Little Books with their hardcovers are more durable. More have survived and as such they are not so rare. The rarest Big, Little Book is an edition given away only as a radio box-top offer—*Buck Rogers and the City of Floating Globes*. It costs about \$50.00. Many of these volumes run ten or fifteen dollars, still others are only three to five dollars. Of course, many of us always knew they were really worth a lot more than their original cost of ten cents.

There were many movie adaptations in the Big, Little Book field. For these, there was a still reproduction on every other page, alternating with the text. (The story was usually written up from the shooting script and sometimes had scenes only as they were planned, and not as they were eventually shot. Some interesting variations with the movies they were based on can be found.)

Bela Karloff appeared in the photos for the edition of *The Lost Patrol*, but that's a war story, not supernatural horror. There were no Big, Little Books of *Frankenstein* or *Dracula* because in the thirties these types of stories were not considered appropriate reading for young people. The closest to a real horror movie with a real horror star was the *Chandu* book.

While the book was called *Chandu the Magician*, it was actually based on the movie serial titled *Return of Chandu*. The first *Chandu* film had been a feature, not a chapterplay. In that one, Lugosi had portrayed the villain, Rorke, opposite the suave Edmund Lowe as the heroic Chandu. But for the sequel, three years later in 1935, Lugosi donned the turban of Chandu himself. Yet

# in Big Little Books

even as a hero, Lugosi seemed sinister, a man truly possessed of the dark powers of magic. Any mageean, from Mandrake to Dr. Strange, seems ominous at times. When the magician is played by Bela Lugosi, he seems full of darkening dread most of the time. The cover of the Saalfield book clearly showed the threatening gaze of Lugosi as Chandu, staring across a crystal ball with the idol of the Egyptian cat-goddess in the background on the wrap-around design.

The story inside concerned the efforts of a group of fanatics to bring the cat-goddess, Ubasti back to life in the mortal world by sacrificing Chandu's girl friend, Nadji, to the idol. Somehow, Nadji's destiny was tied to

that of Ubasti. Chapter after chapter, Chandu thwarted the plans of the cult.

On one occasion, the cult members had placed Nadji in a trance, hiding her in a mummy case. Naturally, Frank Chandler—alias Chandu rushed to her aid.

Chandler fought his way through the maddened crowd, to where Nadji lay in the mummy case before the altar. He lifted her in his arms as Vindhyan rose and his followers circled about the fire bowl to prevent Chandler's escape.

Chandler threw out his right hand.  
"Get Gorbe!" he shouted and instantly a dense cloud of



Bela Lugosi as Chandu the Magician. He was a good guy here, and the only blood that got shed was shed by the bad guys. Believe me right!

smoke seemed to emit from his hand. It formed a gall between him and the angry worshippers. Chandler dashed through the door of the temple...

This simple story, adapted from the script by the creators of the radio series of *Chandu*, Harry Earles and Vera Oldham, was just to the tastes of young readers in the thirties. One of the pleasures of these serial adaptations was that you could occasionally get the book before the serial had finished playing out its twelve or thirteen or fifteen weeks at your local theatre. You could peek ahead in the pages of the thick little volume and see what was coming next. It was a real key to the future.

The greatest serial heroes were probably *Flash Gordon* and *Buck Rogers* (both were performed by actor Buster Crabbe on the screen). There were Big, Little Books of their exploits, but these were based on reprints of the comic strips from the newspapers. The *Flash Gordon* titles reprinted the gorgeous artwork of Alex Raymond. The story of Flash, Dale and Dr. Zarkov on the mysterious planet, Mongo, was told in long captions with no balloons for dialogue. The comic strip text made up the "novel" side of the Big, Little Book with relatively few changes.

With the first of these titles, *Flash Gordon* on the

Planet Mongo, the Alex Raymond strip told the story of young Earthman Flash Gordon, his lovely girl friend, Dale Arden, and their old scientist mentor, Dr. Heas Zarkov. Their adventures brought them into contact with the half-man, half-animal inhabitants of the planet—as well as the fully human ones—although one wonders if Ming the Merciless could be described as truly human. The bearded emperor of that world foreshadowed dictators like Hitler and Stalin who would all-to-soon come to power on our own planet—their real-life villainies actually surpassed those of Ming. The emperor Emperor of Mongo at least had a certain sense of honor, and—as Flash found out in hand-to-hand encounters—Ming was no coward. Like Bogart or Karloff, Ming was a fascinating character, and not entirely unsympathetic.

One of the best sequences appeared in the Big, Little Book, *Flash Gordon and the Tournaments of Mongo*. In that volume, Ming declared a "Tournament of Death" in which anyone—even his enemy, Flash—could contend for the bride of his choice and kingship of one of the many distant provinces of Mongo.

The tournament resembled the ancient Games of Rome, but with such science-fiction touches as the warriors carrying lances tipped with flaming radium, riding horses from whose heads grew a single, vicious horn that the horses had been trained to use. Fights with



It's *Bogart* with the experience of the rogue planet Mongo on the *Bardly* harness. These intrepid adventurers took off in a primitive rocket to explore the new world and enter Alex Raymond's *Flash Gordon* from there, boy, was *Flash Gordon* fun!

spears, wrestling bouts amid a forest of sharpened stakes, and a duel with swords while walking a tightrope above a fiery pit were just a few of the spectacles that followed.

Fascinating among the spectacle was Emperor Ming's grand entrance "riding between the jaws of Death." He sat in the very mouth of a gigantic, horned human skull, being pulled by horned tigers, his long spade-bearded face resembling the Devil himself. This scene was reproduced in three-dimensions in one of the variations on the Big, Little Book—the Pop-up Book. Ming, the great skull, the tigers sprang up in paper cut-out models when the book was opened. The same principle is used in greeting cards today, and even some pop-up type books of fairy tales and fables. But only in the thirties could you get such pop-ups of *Flash*, *Buck Rogers*, *Dick Tracy*, *Tarzan* and others.

*Buck Rogers* was another space explorer in the Big, Little Books. He had, in fact, preceded *Flash Gordon* in the newspaper comic, appearing as early as 1929. (*Flash* came along in 1934.) The stories and artwork were much simpler than for *Flash*. Written by Phil Nowland and drawn by Dick Calkins (later by Rock Yager) the strip seemed aimed at an even younger audience, introducing them to the concepts of interplanetary flight, time travel and other-world creatures. The *Buck Rogers* feature helped gain public acceptance for science fiction in other comic strips, as films and in books and magazines. It is a

landmark in popular culture. And if it seems amusingly simple today, remember the audience it reached was totally innocent of science fiction concepts that we now encounter daily.

*Buck Rogers* was a man of the Twentieth Century who was trapped in a coal mine, sealed alive in a pocket of gas, and not released until five hundred years later, kept alive and young through suspended animation. He awoke to a world where North America was almost completely enslaved by Oriental invaders. A brave few fought on—Lieutenant Wilma Deering, a lovely lady soldier (an early exponent of Women's Lib), and kindly old genius, Doc Hoot, were foremost among the resistance. Killer Kane, mustached, slick-haired, soon proved a traitor to the American cause and became *Buck Rogers*' enemy for decades. Unlike Ming, Killer Kane seemed no more menacing than a big city gangster.

However, with his flying belt and zap-gun, *Buck Rogers* fought other perils—giant robots, the Tiger Men (were-like creatures, the tiny people of the asteroid belt known as Asterites, and countless others. After the world finally began getting space flight in real life, interest in the fictional exploits of *Buck Rogers* faded and he was discontinued in the newspaper comics. In some part, *Buck Rogers* was responsible for alerting the public to the possibilities of space flight and for making it a reality.

Another hero of the thirties in Big, Little Books—and



In the beginning—before Star Trek, before 2001, before *Robby the Robot*—there was *Buck Rogers*. Who single-handedly fought off the vicious Mongol Hostile Tribes, thank the Lord, these changes were there...



the imitations of them—was Tom Mix. Along with Buck Jones, Tim McCoy and Ken Maynard, he was one of the top cowboy idols of the twenties and thirties—in fact, the top hand. (He had some experience as a real-life western law man. Publicity exaggerated it.) Many of his adventures on the screen and on the radio series, *Tom Mix and His Straight Shooters*, took place in a fantasy-like modern west with airplanes and automobiles co-existing with cowboys and rustlers on horseback. A few of the radio stories entered into science fiction or fantasy, and at least one movie—a fifteen chapter serial, *The Miracle Rider*. This film was fictionalized in two Sunfield books—the first half in *Chief of the Rangers* and the concluding half in *Tom Mason on Top*. (Oddly enough, the character Tom Mix played in the film was called "Tom Morgan," but the books changed it to "Tom Mason" for no apparent reason.)

The story of the film and books concerns the efforts of Tom Mix, a Texas Ranger captain, to prevent wealthy industrialist, Zaroff (played by Charles Middleton, also Ming of the Flash Gordon movie serial) from driving the Ravenhead Indians off their reservation. Zaroff wanted the land because it contained the ore needed to create X-94, the most powerful explosive then known. He used such super-scientific devices as heat rays which set the Indians' homes and crops on fire, as well as a radio controlled "rocket glider" that he sent over their lands to make them think their legendary Fleabird god had returned.

### CHIEF OF THE RANGERS

anticipating his future glory, he rode away.

At that moment, Tom, with Tony close beside him, was making a searching examination of the wreckage of the glider. His attention finally centered on a cell box, the name plate of which said, *Emil Jausz, Distributor.*

During the Silents Era, Tom Mix was where John Wayne is today, except that Mix had been a real cowboy, in the real West! And, boy, was he good at it!

In the course of the two books—illustrated with photographic scenes from the serial—Tom Mix went on a wild ride in that primitive rocketship, was subjected to several attacks employing the super-explosive, X-94, and still had time for the usual horseback chases, gun fights and fist fights of Western movies. It was Tom Mix's first sound serial and his last film of any kind. It remains a good example of serial-making in the early thirties.

Probably even more charming—though a bit strange—is *The Phantom Empire*, with Gene Autry as a singing cowboy visiting the futuristic, underground city of Morania. That was another Mason serial made about the time of *The Miracle Rider*. Unfortunately, it was

never adapted into Big, Little Book form, unlike many other Gene Autry stories, which did appear in B.L.B. editions.

Nearly every popular star or fictional character of the thirties was done as a Big, Little Book, or one of the imitations such as *Saalfeld*, *Five Star Library*, etc. "Nearly" was the word. I would love to see adaptations of the *Flash Gordon* and *Buck Rogers* serials with the movie still photos. It would be great to find a Big, Little Book of *The Mummy* and, of course, *King Kong*. Alas, those do not exist—they were never published. The titles that were based, though, remain a delightful treasure trove.



# RONDO.



# The Purest of Them All

by Richard O'Brien

Back around 1947 I sent the only fan letter I ever wrote. Actually, it was a fan postcard, addressed to "Rondo Hatton, Universal Pictures, Hollywood, California." On the other side, I wrote, approximately, "Dear Mr. Hatton. You are my favorite actor. Could you please send me a picture of you?" Now, strictly speaking, this wasn't true. Rondo Hatton wasn't my favorite actor because *first* *extremely*, he was no actor at all. But as a 1947 screen presence, he certainly had no rival in my estimation, not even June Haver.

I never received an answer, but that didn't surprise me. The address was sketchy; it was quite possible that Hatton had no permanent ties to Universal, and besides, he wasn't quite the picture-sending-out pin-up type. So I did the next best thing. Returned to my horror scrapbook which contained, prominently, advertisements and theatre programs of Rondo Hatton movies.

I'd first run across Rondo at the Flatbush Theatre on Church Avenue off Flatbush Avenue in Flatbush, Brooklyn, in 1946. The Flatbush Theatre had seen better days, at one time serving as part of the "Subway Circuit" which housed touring Broadway-type shows in the five boroughs of New York City. By 1946, it had become a vaudeville house, serving up double features and five acts of grotto-loaded (and vice versa) vaudeville, both of which were lapped up with relish by its predominantly eleven to twelve-year-old audience.

I'd never heard of Rondo Hatton, but well before I'd left the twin-billing of *Jungle Captive* and *Spider Woman Strikes Back*, I was a convert.

Even at the age of twelve, there was little question in my mind of what was wrong with Hatton. Ever a collector of far-out faces, I'd long admired from afar the wrestlers The Angel and The Swedish Angel (the latter featured prominently in the tug-of-war in *Mighty Joe Young*), both of whom suffered from the same feature-distorting disease: acromegaly. And Rondo Hatton resembled them greatly.

According to *The Family Medical Guide* (Meredith Press), acromegaly "is a chronic progressive disease due to hypersecretion of the growth-stimulating hormone... characterized by enlargement of the hands and feet, cartilaginous part of bones, soft tissue of the body, and such structures as the heart, spleen and liver." Moe to the point, acromegaly enlarges the nose, jaw, and frontal bones of the face, also causing the teeth to become spaced, the lower eyelids to bag, and the tongue to swell significantly. During the active part of the disease, "excessive strength gives way to progressive weakness," there are frequent headaches and a reduction the sexual drive. The disease can finally abate, but the damage it does to the body and face is—for the most part—irreversible.

So that's what did it for me, and I imagine for most Rondo Hatton fans. Talk about purity and truth! Universal was anticipating the social realism of the 60s and 70s by casting a real monster in the part of a monster.



Rondo Hatton—a personal interpretation by author Richard O'Brien

And that was enough for me; in fact, occasionally that was all I got. I remember going to see a serial about the mounted police (*The Royal Mounted Rides Again* - Universal, 1945) as many Saturdays as I could just to see Rondo portray a character called, I believe, Moose. All Moose did, week after week, was sit in front of a door to the villain's office in the back of a saloon. He never said a word, never did anything, till the final chapter. In fact, it's possible they even used the same brief closeup week after week. But still, it was Rondo, and considering that he was perhaps the second worst actor in the history of Hollywood (a swim champion named Mala was the worst—catch the serial *Robinson Crusoe of Clipper Island*, in which he starred), perhaps the best role for him. Finally, in that last chapter (or, if not the last chapter, the last one for me)—without Rondo, there was no longer any reason for me to go to see it—he did move, silently pulling out a derringer but being beaten to the draw, dying without ever once having gotten out of his chair.

There wasn't a friend of mine who didn't hear of Rondo Hatton—I made sure of that—and most of them got dragged along with me to see any movies we could find him in. In those days, that boiled down to just three—occasional reshootings of *Jungle Captive* and *Spider Woman Strikes Back*, and perhaps Hatton's biggest film, *House of Horrors*. It was only years later, when television came into our homes and began showing old movie after old movie that I caught up with more Rondo's career, sometimes catching him in a film myself, sometimes being told about one by a friend.

It should be mentioned that Hatton was one actor who received virtually no publicity during his career; more likely it was literally no publicity, apart from movie stills and billing, since I've never come across any. In fact, often in the early days, when his films were shown on TV,



Rondo as Moloch, in Universal's *Jungle Captive*. "Rondo's lethargic acting and gravelly voice didn't advance the movie at all, but his mere brute presence was enough to make him stand out."

The romantic leads would often be mentioned in the capsule description of the film, but never Hatton. Lately, that seems to be less and less the case, as if somehow, after all these years, people have become aware of him, perhaps even intrigued, and feel he's worth at least a mention in the movies in which he figured so prominently.

Taste—the feeling that one shouldn't exploit an unfortunate—may have been one reason why Rondo Hatton was so often relegated to the shadows, but an even likelier reason he wasn't publicized is that he died just about the time his career began to move into gear. Born April 29th, 1894 in Hagerstown, Maryland, he died on February 2nd (Groundhog Day), 1946. As we shall see, three of his four biggest movies were released after his death. And that, as I discovered years later, is why I had never received a picture from Rondo Hatton. Because he was dead.

Hatton, a newspaperman and a veteran of the First World War, apparently made his debut in the United Artists movie *Hell Harbor* (released February 23rd, 1930). All movies mentioned herein will be listed with dates of release, where possible; and this, perhaps, is what whetted his interest in movies, since *Hell Harbor* was made, not in Hollywood, but in the area of Tampa and St. Petersburg, Florida, while Hatton worked on the Tampa Tribune. Just when he actually arrived in Hollywood is uncertain, but definitely by 1937, as he appeared in a small role as Brian Donlevy's henchman in *In Old Chicago* (Fox - 1/4/38); interestingly enough, he looked not at all like a man with horror-movie potential, but actually rather small and gently pathetic in appearance, speech

and actions. His next recorded film is *The Cyclone Kid* (8/10/40) and I remember spotting him in the bit role of a leper in *The Moon and Sixpence*, based on the life of artist Paul Gauguin (United Artists - 9/9/42). In *The Ox-Bow Incident* (Fox - 5/10/43) he apparently had a bit as a locker-on at a hanging.

1944 is when his career really began to move, though I'm informed by a friend that the year started off insipidously for Hatton with a bit role in *The Lodger* (Fox - 1/17/44), and there was an apparently unremarkable appearance in the Universal serial *Raiders of Ghoul City* (1944). But *Sherlock Holmes and the Pearl of Death* (Universal - 8/28/44) came along, and for the first time the potential of Rondo Hatton became evident, as he played the Houston Creeper, no relation apparently, except in name to the Creeper of *House of Horrors* and *The Bruin Man*. In *Pearl of Death*, he was a stranger, rather than a back-breaker. *Pearl of Death*, incidentally, seems to be one of the more obscure Sherlock Holmes films, turning up only rarely in film reference books.

His next major appearance for Universal was in *Jungle Captive* (6/18/45), playing Moloch—mad doctor Otto Kruger's assistant—in a film that dealt with transforming a young woman into an ape. Hatton's lethargic acting—no facial or vocal expression—and gravelly voice didn't advance the movie at all, but his mere brute presence was enough to make him stand out, and someone at Universal was obviously quick to realize this.

He was next billed as "Mario the Monster Man" in *The Spider Woman Strikes Back* (Universal - 3/15/46), this time as an assistant to the Spider Woman herself, Gale Sondergaard. In this film, the powers-that-be solved

Hatton's acting deficiencies by having him play a muse, and once again he stood out, adding more than a filip of excitement to what otherwise would have been a completely forgettable horror filler. The story, such as it is, deals with the Spider Woman's drawing blood from Brenda Joyce so that she can feed a carnivorous plant, which in turn will enable her to distill its poison and kill off the farmer's cattle so she can regain her former land from them. The Spider Woman—also known as Zenobia—and Mario are trapped in a blazing mansion at the end of the picture. Kirby Grant was the male love interest and Miltura Stone, Doe of "Gunsmoke," was a Federal Agent.

Hatton vaulted to a kind of stardom in *House of Horrors* (Universal, 5/17/48), known in England as *Joan Medford Is Missing!* He didn't get top billing, but there was no question that he was the star. *House of Horrors* opened at New York's Rialto Theatre, in the days when the Rialto was the first-run showcase for the cream of the "B" horror films. "Meet the Creeper! Monster of Terror!" shamed the advertisement in the *New York Daily News*, which, according to the ad, had said of *House of Horrors*: "A spine-chiller, guaranteed to scare." But no billing for Rondo in the ad, and the ad used was a not-so-hot painting, rather than an actual photo of the real thing (see Thing, threatening a recumbent blonde). *House of Horrors* had some good things going for it, notably its beginning, as Hatton, now known as "The Creeper," is rescued from a watery grave. Also there was Hatton's garb, basically a dark (probably padded) coat and sinister-looking, crumpled hat, as well as a touch or two of horror-deepening makeup. Finally, there was Martin Kosleck, who lent a nice touch of the sinister to his performance. Unfortunately, the above is about all you got in the way of atmosphere. The sets and other actors looked as if they could have been used in any grade-B crime drama.

*House of Horrors* revolved about Kosleck, a maddened

sculptor, who in return for saving the Creeper, has him murder a critic whom Kosleck considers an enemy. A police lieutenant (played by radio announcer Bill Goodwin) suspects newspaper columnist Joan Medford (Virginia Grey) and her artist-boyfriend (Robert Lowery) of being involved in the murder. Medford, following up her own suspicions, visits Kosleck's studio and is nearly murdered by the Creeper after she's gotten him to kill Kosleck. She's saved at the last moment by Goodwin and Lowery.

Checking back on my scrapbook, I see that back in 1946 I rated *House of Horrors* as Fair Plus, the plus undoubtedly deriving from Hatton's presence. He was the definitive Creeper, snapping backs the way some people crack nuts.

*Bruise Men*, released by PRC in 1946 (no specific release date available) seems to have been Hatton's last movie. In my opinion, it may have been the best (Universal apparently didn't feel the same way—word is that they made it but were so embarrassed by it that they let PRC, the dregs of Hollywood, release it), with a bit more of plot line than usual, and the presence of capable "B" actor Tom Neal making the usual low-dive-fright stuff a little more bearable.

In a way, Rondo Hatton was an instance of life imitating art, the art of the horror movie deriving not from life but from a fear of the unknown, of unseen terrors embodied. Rondo Hatton, was the corporeal embodiment of these abstract terrors, and for that reason alone, deserved a niche in the Horror Hall of Fame. True, he wasn't an actor. But how much of an actor was Alan Ladd or Johnny Weissmuller or, for that matter, June Haver? But they did have the magic of presence, and for that reason, they were stars. For that same reason, Rondo Hatton, too, can be considered a star of sorts. He has always been that for me.

One last note for the sentimental, Rondo Hatton—Monster of Terror—was married.

In 1947, Rondo hit the real big time as The Creeper, a monstrous man-brute raised from a watery grave by mad-sculptor Martin Kosleck. Later preserved for posterity in stone. Even after buried, but only after he saved the house and killed Kosleck...well, you can't win 'em all!



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# COUNT YORGA-

by Eric Hoffman

In 1970, when American-International Pictures released *Count Yorga, Vampire*, an unexpected horror hit emerged, adding a new member to the ranks of favorite characters of the macabre, and bringing about a new terror star, Robert Quarry. Filmed on a small budget by Michael Marmaduke (son of famed character actor George Macready), *Count Yorga* caught audiences right in their seat of the macabre and, together with its companion pictures, *Return of Count Yorga*, pops up fairly regularly at screenings, both theatrical and at gatherings of connoisseurs of the macabre.

Instead of setting the plot in the wilds of Transylvania or some European locale, producer Macready and writer/director Robert Kelly decided to place the action closer to home (at least for California residents) by putting Yorga's base of operations in an old mansion some miles in the woods outside of Los Angeles. The plot itself gets right into things with our first glimpse of the sun, wintry Count presiding over a scene held by a group of young people, one of whom, Donna, has just lost her mother—a lady who just happened to have been Yorga's playground for over 1 month. After a moment when it seems Donna has made contact, the scene breaks up and Yorga is given a lift to his home by two of the romps—Paul and Eric—in their camper. As they head through the gloomy estate, the writer decides to utilize one of the powers of the vampire—his control of elements—though not to a tragicomic degree. All he does is cause them to get bogged down in a patch of mud in a road where there was no mud before. When the duo have to stay there for the night, Yorga seizes the opportunity to knock Paul out and vampires Eric, beginning a slow, grisly process that soon turns the gal into a vampire, making her one of his small personal harem of vampire women (among the trio is Donna's mother). Paul, suspecting Yorga's hand in the disappearance of his girl friend, makes the mistake of going to Yorga's house and is quickly dispatched via the Count's breathy handmaiden, Bradah.

Yorga's righting them afterward, Donna and she eventually becomes a captive at the vampire's house, where she is reunited with her mother. Meanwhile,

## THE VAMPIRE FOR HERE AND NOW



Michael, her boyfriend (producer Macready doing double duty) and Dr. Hayes, a friend, suspecting the truth about the Count, decide to make a rescue attempt. While Hayes keeps the vampire master occupied with a conversation on vampires started in another part of the film, Michael finds Paul's corpse, nearly getting himself killed by Brudah in the process; instead it is Brudah who is dispatched (don't you believe it!).

Yorga, realizing Hayes' intentions (remarking at one point that the vampire is superior to mortals in the fact that during their long lives they have acquired the wisdom of the ages) sacs his three vampire women on the doctor just before the final confrontation between vampire and Michael. Yorga is finally dispatched with a stake to the heart; Donna's vampire-mother is finished off as well, and the two remaining female Undead are locked up in a part of the house. Sure now that he and Donna are safe, Michael finds out differently when Donna lunges at him, fangs bared—a full vampire—and the screen fades to black.

*Return of Count Yorga*, 1971, made no attempt to be a direct continuation of the first film. It did exactly what the title implied—it brought back Yorga, without any frantic attempts to revive him via black magic, blood sacrifice, removal of stake, etc., etc. He's simply there, hale, hearty (as much as a vampire can be), set up in another mansion (this time supposedly outside of San Francisco) and just as evil as before.

At the opening, Tommy, a youngster from an orphanage near Yorga's home (which seems to have its own cemetery for Yorga's vampire entourage), is playing on the estate; he becomes the first to encounter the 'Deathmaster' and as the film wears on, we see that the lad is definitely under Yorga's control. Yorga's first appearance as his urbane self is at a masquerade held at the orphanage where he meets the film's heroine, Cynthia Nelson, her fiancé Dr. Baldwin and Jennifer, a

deaf-mute worker at the orphanage. On the incidental side, Yorga loses the first prize for the best costume to a contestant wearing a poor version of a vampire's outfit and appearance.

Seduced by Cynthia, Yorga decides to get her for himself and, on a night when Jennifer—a house-guest of Cynthia's family—is sleeping, a hoede of Yorga's ghoulish vampire women attack and massacre the entire family—with the exception of Cynthia who gets carried away, unconscious. Jennifer finds the grisly evidence of the evening massacre and goes to get help from Reverend Thomas, head of the orphanage. But Yorga's powers have not diminished any since his first film and when Jennifer, the Reverend and the police return to the Nelson home everything is neat, tidy, no broken windows, no bodies; just a note saying the family has gone to visit a relative. Tommy was also staying the night at the Nelsons, but he says nothing to substantiate Jennifer's frantic claims about the gruesome murders. The Reverend Thomas suspects something, but he isn't sure.

Cynthia, meanwhile, has been convinced by Yorga that she was involved in an auto accident and that the Count has been caring for her. Cynthia soon finds she is a virtual prisoner; while Yorga begins to stalk new victims, murdering a couple on a boat at a marina. Eventually, Cynthia's fiancé manages to convince Lt. Madden of the

An eerie face at the window, a shrill scream, and a moment later... Death! As a young woman discovers that vampires are far, far more than myth.





The eternal human: what do you do when the woman you love becomes a vampire?

He had come to save his love—Count Yorga invited, he found only his own death. From American International's, Count Yorga, Vampire!

police that something just isn't kosher and the Lieutenant, a Sgt. O'Connor and some officers head for Yorga's house, where all get massacred by Yorga's crew of vampire women (but not before Brudah, Yorga's henchman, is killed off, again, by police bullets). Cynthia—now aware of Yorga's true dining habits—is fleeing the vampires when David, who has seemingly escaped becoming vampire's dinner, appears and does battle with Yorga. But it is Cynthia who delivers the finishing blow to the Count; freed of his spell, the girl drives a battle-axe blade into Yorga's heart and the vampire pitches over the castle balcony to his end. The film ends with a reverse on the ending of the first picture—this time it is David who has become a vampire and Cynthia is the victim of her fiancé's blood-thirsty desires.

Such is life.

Robert Quarry, Roger Perry and Edward Walsh were the only cast members to appear in both Yorga productions, with Quarry coming off strongest. In fact, in the opinion of many, he is the main strength of the film. He's suave, urbane, coldly amicable when necessary, at times displaying a touch of sardonic humor that helps put the Yorga character across as more than the usual film vampire la distinction not held by many portrayals of the Undead.

Each film had its particular high points. The first one



had Yorga's attack on Paul and Erica, his now familiar slow-motion charge (quite effective in its usage) and the cat-and-mouse confrontation disguised as a conversation between Dr. Hayes and Yorga, where the Count calmly expounds on the subject of vampires—all the while toying with the sharpened stick that Hayes intends to drive into his vampiric heart. In this sequence, Yorga's urbane/human side and his vampiric character are beautifully juxtaposed as he mocks the ill-fated doctor before his vampire women take over.

The second, bigger-budgeted film, enables Yorga to have a larger coterie of followers, all appropriately ghastly looking—including an old witch-type—who turns out to be a vampire herself. The massacre of the Nelson family is heightened by tight editing, and the buildup to the inevitable massacre of the police, et al had theatre audiences jumping.

Here one finds a case of defending one's front from Count Yorga, while remaining defenseless everywhere else. Because, you see, the ladies are vampires, too.

Producer Michael Macready and Director Robert Kelljan—who wrote the script of the first film and collaborated with Yvonne Wilder (who portrayed Jennifer) on the second—added some tongue-in-cheek touches, with Quarry giving some good throw-away lines, such as his put-down of a young rock pianist who asks him if he likes this sort of music (Yorga coldly replies, "Only when it's played well").

Of special note is the fact the actor George Macready played a part in both films. In the first, he provided an effectively sinister narration at the beginning in that familiar whispery voice. In second production, he did a comedy cameo as a hard-of-hearing expert on vampires.

Public opinions on the Yorga productions have been mixed, but one thing is very certain—even with only two pictures made about this blood-thirsty nobleman, Count Yorga has left his mark in the genre of film terror.



# COUNT YORGE SPEAKS

Art by Miriam Haze

by Al Saxon and Don Glut

ROBERT QUARRY, a veteran of some thirty years of stage, screen, television and radio acting, has stepped out into the limelight in recent years through his starring roles in the American-International horror classics, *Count Yorga, Vampire*; and *The Return of Count Yorga*; as well as *The Deathmaster* and *Dr Phibes Rises Again*. Now we all know how hard it is to pin a good horror star

down—I mean, ask any self-respecting vampire hunting—but the staff of *MONSTERS OF THE MOVIES* is nothing if not enterprising. Anyway, MOM reporters Al Saxon and Don Glut managed to corral Quarry in Hollywood, just after he'd returned from shooting *Dr. Phibes Rises Again*; the three of them talked, to put it mildly, a loooong time. Enjoy, pilgrim.

**MOM:** Do you have any personal interest in horror films or the occult?

**Quarry:** I've been a horror film buff since I was a little kid. I go to see every horror film that's ever made, good, bad, or indifferent. There's no such thing as a bad horror film to me, because I think the really bad ones are funny. I don't have any serious occult beliefs; these things are all myth and legend. I think probably, though, that every monster-story, every fable is based on some kind of truth. These things all came out of the Middle Ages when superstitions were such that people wanted to believe in these things. It was a great release for them, it made their lives more bearable. To the peasants, a terrible lord of an estate became the monster of legend. Count Dracula, they're now proved, actually existed. It's also been proven. I believe, that at certain periods of the moon, people react, biologically and psychologically, in a different fashion. So, people sensing this, without any great scientific knowledge, made stories out of these things. They'd discover that there was more violence in the general society during the full moon, so legends of werewolves would grow out of the fact. I don't believe in ghosts, witchcraft, or any of these things, and yet, as I say, they're all related in some funny sort of way to truth. I don't live in a world where things go "bump" in the night, but I think it's fun to see films and read about these things. I'm a great science-fiction reader, I love murder mysteries and gothic horror stories.

**MOM:** Would you care to name a few favorites?

**Quarry:** For instance, I love the collection of Ray Bradbury's horror stories, *The October Country*—they're marvelous, weirdo stories. Then, I have my favorites in science-fiction writers. Ray for one, Arthur Clarke for another. I've read so much, I don't have any one thing that stands out in my mind. You can go back for years and years, to the Ambrose Bierce stories, Will Collins' *The Woman in White*, all of the Poe stories. I grew up on all of these things, always loved them. I'm sorry they don't make better films sometimes, when they film these properties, but then, as a rule, horror films have never been budgeted according to their worth. They tend, in Hollywood, to degenerate them. There was a period in the early thirties when they tried very hard to make good horror films. The first three *Frankenstein* films were probably as fine pieces of film-making as you could come upon. Now, when garbage like *Mansfield Van Doren* and *The Tree People* comes out, you want to run for the hills. The trouble is, you can't find a studio these days that will spend money on that kind of film. I don't know why, because a well-made horror film, or a well-made science fiction film always makes money. And yet, it's very difficult to get a studio to put up backing for it. Both of the *Count Yorga* films, for instance, were made for peanuts, and it was just a fluke that they succeeded.

**MOM:** Possibly that's the reason they don't want to spend money on horror films—because they know low-budget films will turn a profit for a small investment?

**Quarry:** If that were the reason, it'd be terrible. But, for example, *Dr. Phibes Rises Again*, if made in America, would have cost about a million and a half, but my studio filmed in England for about half a million. That's about the standard price to produce a horror film there. Here



George Varga (bottom) Quarry and ... a friend, and we say?

it's about \$200,000, if you can raise that much.

**MOM:** Anything in particular you'd care to say about that movie?

**Quarry:** No, except that I was very pleased. It was beautifully produced, well-directed, and well-acted. We had a very good cast—Peter Cushing, Hugh Griffith, Terry Thomas, and Ouryl Reed. But, you see, you can get a good cast to do horror films in England, you can't get one here. Actors here don't want to do horror films; they think it's beneath them. I notice in *Tales From the Crypt*, for instance, there was Ralph Richardson and Richard Green, along with Peter Cushing and Joan Collins. A pretty fine cast—you can't get a cast like that together here. In the first place, the costs are all prohibitive here. But in England, a top actor will come in—Peter Cushing had six lines with me in one scene, and that's all. It's worth paying him to put his name in the cast, because he's a good draw for horror films. Hugh Griffith, who's an Academy Award winner, also came in on that picture, and we worked three days together. If these people did that here, people would say they were failing. "On the skids." They don't look at it that way in England. Actors there live to work, as long as they're paid decently. I think that was the reason for the great revival of horror films in England at Hammer Films, because they spent a little money to make rather lavish-looking films, and featured solid casts.

**Quarry:** If that were the reason, it'd be terrible. But, for example, *Dr. Phibes Rises Again*, if made in America, would have cost about a million and a half, but my studio filmed in England for about half a million. That's about the standard price to produce a horror film there. Here



No, Virginia, this is not a meeting of the Harryhausen Association Society, but look for the kiss in the middle, though.

**MOM:** Possibly the actors here are afraid of getting type-cast?

**Quarry:** Well, who cares? As long as you're working, and it does well for you? Why not? I'd rather someone say "There goes Count Yorga" than "There goes what's-his-name!" I don't mean an actor should do plain garbage, of course. I wasn't going to do *Count Yorga* at first. It was originally written as a exploitation film. I read the script and told the writers I'd do it if they turned it into a straight horror film. After all these years, I thought it'd be great fun to play a vampire. It's very funny, I was doing a picture with Paul Newman at the time, and when I told him I was going to play a vampire he said he'd always wanted to play in a horror film. I said, "Well, I'll trade you parts!" I'm really lucky now that we don't trade parts, because *WUSA* was a great flop, and *Count Yorga* made a great deal of money. I think most actors I know would do to do a horror film, but some actors are affected by public opinion and think it's degrading. I don't know why there's such an outburst against films of that type in Hollywood. They certainly don't have that problem in London. Everybody there boasts a leg to try to get into any kind of film in the first place, and horror films, they think, are a special art form, which I also think. That's what horror films stand for. There are comedies, dramas, all kinds of films, and then there are horror films. As I said, here, in the late

twenties and thirties, they were considered a very special art form, and then they were just bastardized by studios turning out garbage. I think Universal, which was originally responsible for making the best horror films, also made the worst ones. They began to want to make movies they could shoot in ten days on a low budget. So, they'd make one good film, like the first *Wolfman* film, and then make a garbage one, and each one got progressively worse. I think the basement of it all was Abbott & Costello meeting Dracula, the Wolfman, and the Frankenstein Monster all in one movie. That's putting it down to garbage.

**MOM:** A lot of people—youthful ones—enjoyed the film... That's what happened to every one of Universal's stock characters—they all wound up meeting Abbott & Costello.

**Quarry:** Well, it was too bad, because that was the end of it; and it took away the kind of distinction horror films had. They ruined all the stock characters they had, made jokes out of them. Now, I don't mind the humor in the two *Yorga* films; they were especially designed that way, to prevent them from being just a lot of gothic rambling through murky castles. But this was in a modern setting, and I think it's very hard to play it all that seriously.

**MOM:** Even some of Universal's best horror films weren't played 100% straight. There were comic relief characters in *Bride of Frankenstein*, *Werewolf of London*...

**Quarry:** There was always a comic something in there somewhere, but not the kind of thing they've done lately. Most of the laughs that are in the horror films of the last ten years I can think of are purely unintentional. They just come because they're badly acted, directed, shot, and badly written. There's been no enduring character to come along. I think that's one of the reasons *Count Yorga* caught on—he's sort of the first new kind of horror figure, even though he's a direct steal from *Dracula*. But, at least the action is in a modern setting, he's a little more with what's happening today than poor old Dracula, who's always lurking around with coach and horses. But, as I said, it's very hard to talk about horror films as an art form anymore, because they've been put down so. But my studio, American-International, has made a fortune out of it with most of their pictures with Vincent Price. Some of them have been good, some not so good, but you take a terrible chance when you make these things. It's very difficult to tell until the product is finished. Because these are films of effect, it's very difficult to look at a horror film in rough-cut and see how it's going to work. People don't realize how much the macabre quality is heightened by technical things—sound effects, or a good musical score, things which accent a scene. The first time I saw the *Count Yorga* rough-cut, I thought, "Oh my God, it's a lesson!" And yet, when they put it all together, I realized how much these things add to suspense—how they set up the "scare" scenes.

**MOM:** *Count Yorga* made great use of fast cutting.

**Quarry:** We talked about this earlier, about trying to put "scare" scenes into these films. I think this is another thing that's gone wrong with horror films, this current obsession with blood and gore. Everything's in color these days, so rather than trying to scare the audience,



Night falls on the California coast... And with the night, Dawn Yorga

they try to see how much blood they can spill. People like to go to horrific movies and be scared, not wonder where they're going to throw up their popcorn because somebody's insides are spilling out all over the screen. I think that's had a lot to do with lowering the level of horror films. What worked best for the average viewer in *Count Yorga* was that there were a lot of good, just plain scary moments, moments where he jumped. Audiences like that; it's a good anxiety release and works out a lot of fantasy-nightmare things that people live with in their daily lives.

**MOMs:** The scene I keep hearing about in *Return of Count Yorga* is the moment that hand comes through the window when it's least expected.

**Quarry:** But, you see, always the good, frightened moments I remember from films are those when I'm caught off guard, when I jump. That hand coming through the window in *Return of Count Yorga* is no different from the hand that shot through the wall in *The Thing*. I don't know if you remember that movie...

**MOMs:** I sure do!

**Quarry:** When they'd all been searching for *The Thing* and suddenly, that hand shot through that door, my God, I flew over the balcony railing! And half the theatre did! Those are the things audiences like, it's just like Halloween. It's that old thing of saying, "Boo!" And people jump. Horror films have certainly become repulsive, rather than frightening. That's a shame, that takes

the fun out of it. It bores the audiences as well, with the rating system they're using these days. That's why AIP won't make a horror film unless it will get a G rating. There were a lot of things taken out of the first *Count Yorga* film, things which I thought were very effective. I didn't think they were repulsive, I didn't think they were half as bad as some of what you see in John Wayne movies that get G ratings—like chopping up a dog with a machete, which he did in a picture called *Big Jake*, I believe. This is gone to me, but it gets a G rating. But in doing a horror film, we have to be more careful about violence, because the Board of Review here wants to let all horror films as R-rated, no matter what. It's foolish, because horror films are really just green-up fairy tales, nothing more than that. They're no more frightening than *Jack in the Beanstalk*.

**MOMs:** I saw the uncut version of *Count Yorga* under the title *The Loves of Count Yorga*. What was cut for the final version?

**Quarry:** They just abbreviated scenes. For instance, the scene of the girl eating the cat—you just get a quick flash of her holding the bloody cat, and you almost can't see what it is. In the original version, she played about a two-minute scene, so the audience could clearly see it was a "dead" kitten. It wasn't dead, of course, it had been drugged and covered with leeches! They cut most of that scene.

**MOMs:** Are they planning any further *Count Yorga* pictures?



Getting to know you, getting to know more about you...

Could this be the end of *Count Yorga*? The answer, unfortunately, is couched more in modest statistics than occult lore, but who knows? Stranger things have happened.



**Quarry:** I don't know, but I don't think so. They talked about it, but it's hard to sell. It depends on whether or not they think there's an audience for it. Both of the *Count Yorga* films did very well—the first one did "sensational" business, the second did "very good" business. They both made plenty of money. You know, there's only so much that can be done with the character and still keep it a fresh, modern concept.

**MOMs:** I can see it, ten years from now: *Cowabunga Meets Dr. Phibes on the Planet of the Apes*!

**Quarry:** That's what usually happens! Actually, there was some talk during the filming of *Dr. Phibes Rises Again* of featuring Count Yorga in that film. But, they didn't do it that way when it came to the final shooting.

**MOMs:** Would you personally care to do another *Count Yorga* film?

**Quarry:** I'd rather not do another *Count Yorga* movie.

**MOMs:** What would you like to do?

**Quarry:** Just keep on making horror films. There are lots of properties around. You know, until Vincent Price played Dr. Phibes, he'd never played a horror character, *per se*. And yet, he's known for all of his horror films.

**MOMs:** So was Karloff, but he actually only played two or three outright monster characters...

**Quarry:** As I said, the reason for not doing too many of these roles is that you wear out your welcome if you do. You can't get that much variety into the roles. When they did a *Frankenstein* adaptation for TV some years ago (*Tales of Tomorrow*) Lon Chaney, Jr. did the role. They'd asked Karloff to play it, and he'd declined. He didn't want to play the Monster anymore. And now, with

**The Monsters**: they've again made a joke out of the character. They've taken all the "scare" out of him. A couple of these pictures are interesting, but there's only so much you can do with this type of character. Count Yorga can only bite somebody on the neck so many times, and that's it. Period. I don't want to get into the kind of thing that's happened to Christopher Lee's *Dracula*. It's certainly not his fault, but the studio's just kept grinding out those movies, and suddenly, in the last few films, he hasn't had anything to do in the stories. He just lurks in the shadows, and the plot isn't his. That starts to happen . . .

**MOM:** The character becomes a prop.

**Quarry:** He's just there. Christopher doesn't have anything to do except stand around in his black cape and his obligatory fangs and wait for the moment to bite somebody. Everybody else has the parts to play in the plot. When the main character becomes just a cardboard cut-out figure, which I think is what's happened to *Dracula*, it wears out its welcome.

**MOM:** Did you do any horror films before Count Yorga?

**Quarry:** No, I'd never done a horror film before. When I was under contract to Universal Pictures, I was going to be in *Sherlock Holmes and the Spider Woman*. I was supposed to double for Basil Rathbone in the scene where he's attacked by tarantulas in his sleep. Basil wouldn't allow them to let tarantulas crawl over him! But they didn't tell me what the scene was, they just told me to go over to the studio and jump in the sack. Then they started to put this trail of liver paste down the walls, and I said, "All right, what's coming out of the walls this time?" They said "Tarantulas." I just got out of that bed and said "They cancel the contract!" I wouldn't touch that! So there went my chance to be in a sort of "horror" film!

I almost had the starring role in *Frogs*, but then the filming of *Dr. Phibes Rides Again* intervened. But I said, "You're not going to throw all those bugs and things all over me?" I saw that one scene in *Frogs* where that boy was attacked by tarantulas, and one of them accidentally fell right into his mouth! I'll tell you, if that'd happened to me, I'd have been a basket case for three months!

**MOM:** That was an accident? That scene is in the final print!

**Quarry:** Yes, that tarantula just flew into his mouth. Well, I really need some hairy spiders in my mouth! I'd have done Willard, the rats would have been okay, or they could throw a few frogs around and I wouldn't mind, but spiders I'm not too crazy about!

**MOM:** How did Count Yorga survive the stake through his heart to return for the sequel?

**Quarry:** He returned because AIP wanted to make another picture about him; that's the only reason he came back. Nobody ever bothered to explain how he mentioned. I thought it was kind of curious that they didn't, because there are so many devices that could've been used—you know, a little blood sprinkled on his dust resurrecting him, or something like that.

**MOM:** That was used in *Dracula, Prince of Darkness*.

**Quarry:** Well, it's been done in some way in all the



always scared me, and I thought Lon Chaney, Jr. was good as *The Wolfman*. But I've always thought Bela was the most over-rated of all the horror film actors around. Christopher Lee, I think, is a marvelous *Dracula*. I think his performance is certainly 100% superior to Lugosi's. And yet, everybody remembers Bela Lugosi as *Dracula*.

So, when I set out to play Count Yorga, I did it seriously, but all the while keeping a sense of humor about it in the back of my mind, and also a sense of camp, because it's very difficult to get away with playing that kind of role straightly in a modern setting. You know, walking around in that cape today, he'd be laughed off the street. People would say, "You're kidding!" So, I tried to find a reasonable characterization, mainly by assuming a sense of "cool" on Yorga's part, which I felt was important, as well as a bit of humor. I warmed the part with an accent, but then played it down, so it wouldn't come out sounding like Lugosi's *Dracula*, which is a joke now.

**MOM:** Hunt Harfield (*The Picture of Dorian Gray*) recently played *Dracula* on the stage, and found that the only way he could hold his audiences was to imitate Lugosi's character.

**Quarry:** *Dracula* is really a terrible play—it's the kind of thing people went to see in the twenties and thirties.

Some of Yorga's lady friends. And, like their master, vampires.

Robert Quarry's arch-nemesis, the evil Dr. Phibes, from AIP's minor classic, *Dr. Phibes Rides Again*.



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The penultimate choice: Save the woman he loves and die, or sacrifice her and gain eternal life.

when they went to see anything just to get out of their drab living rooms. The dialogue and situations are ludicrous. I've been asked to go on the road in *Dressed*, but I wouldn't go out in that old turkey for anything in the world! I'm kind of surprised Hurd went out in that play. He probably did it for the same reasons most actors, including as I mentioned earlier, Paul Newman might—because playing a horror character is fun. It's the kind of thing that makes acting a pleasure. I think the original attraction of action is this kind of easy make-believe. That horror films are made of—kind of like kids playing cowboys and Indians or cops 'n' robbers. It's the great pretending. These days too many movies strive for realism, and that takes a lot of the fun out of acting.

**MOM:** Would you like to see movies go back to being primarily "escape" entertainment?

**Quarry:** No, not all of them. I'd rather see movies go back to being movies again. I'm sick and tired of seeing movies that don't make any sense, and I hate artsy-craftsy films. They drive me right up the wall! I'm bored with that. I like movies that have a beginning, a middle, an end—something happening in them. I think there were very important films made in the thirties,

forties, and fifties, and there are important films being made now, that are sensible films, they're still movies. I'm so happy just to see a good movie these days!

**MOM:** You'd think the studios would take the hint from television—the tube is saturated with old horror movies.

**Quarry:** Well, *The Night Stalker* (see interview with author Jeff Rice in MONSTERS OF THE MOVIES #1) was the highest rated television movie of its year, so there is an audience for horror films. But, unfortunately, horror films were fun when it cost a buck or so to go see them. I don't think people now think of going to see what you'd call "fun" films at \$2.50 to \$3.00 a showing. This has chipped into the business a lot. The Super-B films that people used to go to see, films that didn't have big budgets, but were very well-made films nonetheless, audiences could afford to see for 50¢ or a dollar a head. Now, when it costs three dollars or more to see a bad A-Budget movie, I don't think people are as inclined to go. People like horror films, but if they're overcharged for the entertainment value they provide, they'll stop paying to see them. But there's no getting around it; production costs are so high. Anything that's a movie—no matter how it's made, no matter for television!



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# HORRORScoop

by Carla Joseph

Greetings, fear-followers! Welcome back to HORRORScoop. Many new spine-chillers will be hitting the screen soon. The reason: Hollywood is about to treat itself to a new and very different kind of blood bath—the type that will doubtlessly delight all true horror movie buffs from coast to coast. And, I thought, with so much going on, you might want to know why it's all happening now, as well as what to expect in the future.

Due to the outstanding economic success of *THE EXORCIST*, and the impressive financial returns over recent years from Hammer and AIP macabre endeavors, many of the major Hollywood motion picture studios have reached the conclusion that there is a definite market in terror; or, put another way, well made horror and supernatural offerings can be just as big—if not bigger—a draw as equally well made pictures in other areas! People today will pay to be frightened! Already, most of the studios have started planning productions of their own—as well as competing for the United States and Canadian distribution rights to Hammer and other foreign-made thrillers.

This current state of film production poses a serious problem to action and suspense filmmakers. They must anticipate what will be popular one or two years in the future, when films undertaken at present will have been completed and released. With the oversupply of Kung Fu and cops-and-robbers films, these producers and directors have been hard pressed to find new areas for activity. The fine profit showings of the current crop

of horror films have helped spark interest in horror production among a rapidly increasing number of moviemakers.

But horror films are not the only ones gaining attention today. Two closely related fields, science fiction and pulp literature are also getting a close examination by Hollywood. All three are constantly overlapping—and, drawing plot and character elements from each other. For example, the *GOJIRAA* films are both monster movies and science fiction offerings; the *PLANET OF THE APES* series combines elements from all three areas; and the renewed *DR. PHIBES* productions are very strongly influenced by pulp literature! What's even more binding is that all three forms appeal to the same motivational needs of the audience—a desire to escape into high tension suspense, totally apart from everyday life.

A look at some of the upcoming fear features, who's producing them, starring in them, and their estimated budgets (when known), will serve to give you a good idea of just how plentiful horror productions have become...

**DANTE'S INFERNO:** Franco Zeffirelli (*ROMEO AND JULIET*) is said to have a budget nearing the eight million dollar mark for his new venture into the everlasting torments of Hades. George C. Scott and Peter O'Toole may well be playing the leads if negotiations for salary payments work out satisfactorily. Another big name on the production will be special effects master, Tom Howard, who's handiwork was seen in *2001: A*

**SPACE ODYSSEY.** The film will be shot in the Postamis Caves of Yugoslavia.

**LEGEND OF THE GOLDEN VAMPIRE:** A producer team-up first is occurring with this film—Hong Kong movie mogul Ran Ran Shaw (noted for his many Kung Fu ventures), has joined forces with Hammer Films to produce a vampire film in the orient. Peter Cushing traveled to Hong Kong for this production, where again he assumed the role of Dr. Van Helsing (this time—a contemporary descendant). The outcome promises to be a most unusual blend of East and West. But, more importantly, it marks the entry of one of the major Oriental movie makers into the classical Western vampire horror film mythos.

**THE MUTATIONS:** Another unexpected occurrence was Columbia Pictures' purchase of the American distribution rights to this modestly budgeted spine-chiller, soon to be playing in haunted movie houses from coast to coast. This one's about a mad scientist who seeks to create new life forms through cross pollination between men and plants. The good doctor makes many mistakes while conducting his experiments, which, in turn make for some very gruesome murders and fear-fraught moments. Donald Pleasance, Michael Dunn and Tom Baker head the cast.

**THE CAVES OF STEEL:** Columbia has another venture currently in the works that should be released sometime within the year. Producer Gerald Ayers (*THE LAST DETAIL*) has assigned Frank Pierson to write the screenplay for this project based upon the highly acclaimed novel of the same title by Isaac Asimov. The film will focus on the prejudices and adjustments of a New York police detective of the future, who is forced to take a robot as his partner in the investigation of a murder. A lot of interest has been generated in this project. Jack Nicholson may play one of the leads.

**LOGAN'S RUN:** M-G-M is also getting into the act with a new science fiction thriller which is rumored to be budgeted at three million dollars. The producers are the same people who did *SOYLENT GREEN*, with Charlton Heston and Edward G. Robinson. *LOGAN'S RUN* promises to be of the same high calibre.

**TALES FROM BEYOND THE GRAVE:** Warner will be moving further into feardom with this second Hammer release, soon to be making the rounds of your neighborhood theatres. This one teams Donald Pleasance with Peter Cushing and is said to be well worth catching.

**TENDER DRACULA:** Even the French are sharpening their fangs—and their wits—with the production of a spoof of the Dracula mythos. Gallic film director Pierre Granstein has been given the reins on this project. Bernard Menet heads the cast.

**YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN:** Speaking of spoofs—the highlight of next season should be Mel Brooks' (*THE PRODUCERS*, *TWELVE CHAIRS*, and *BLAZING SADDLES*) new concoction. Mel has been hard at work on this latest laughgerpece—a revamping of the Frankenstein legend. The cast will include Mel Brooks regular, Gene Wilder, who played Bloom in *THE PRODUCERS* and The Waco Kid in *BLAZING SADDLES*.

He'll be teamed with Peter Boyle, Marty Feldman, and Cloris Leachman.

**THE GHOST IN THE NOONDAY SUN:** Columbia also intends to have a comic offering for feardom. Peter Sellers has been signed to star in this production which will be filmed in England.

Of course, no look at the horror scene would be complete without word on American International Pictures (AIP). This production and distribution house has been responsible for the release of many fine spine-tingling productions including both the *DR. PHIBES* and *BLACULA* series. And, AIP has let the word out that there will be many more good offerings coming up in the near future!

**DERANGED:** Topping the list of recent AIP thrillers is this Karr International production, patterned heavily on Alfred Hitchcock's *PSYCHO*. The film follows the activities of a psychopathic killer who keeps his mother's corpse in his home. Robert Blossoms plays the killer.

Other AIP releases that are currently making the macabre circuit are *IT LIVES BY NIGHT* (a werewolf film), *SUGAR HILL* (a zombie singer), and *DON'T LOOK IN THE BASEMENT* (a murder model).

So, now you know who will be doing what and why horror films will spell big business for the next few years. Warner Brothers, Paramount Pictures, M-G-M, Columbia, and 20th Century-Fox, will all be making their own inroads into the horror field to join with AIP and many smaller production units that will be bringing to the horror screen awesome delights. Whether these new films will follow in the great Hollywood horror tradition of Lon Chaney's "Werewolf," or Bela Lugosi's *DRACULA*, remains to be seen. But let's welcome these major companies and wish them the best in bringing us the most spine-tingling mind-boggling fright flicks we've ever attended.



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